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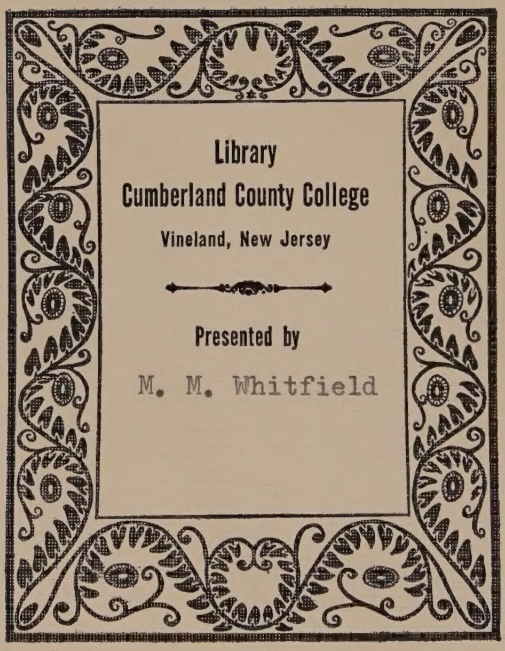
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SIBERIA AND THE EXILE SYSTEM

A MARCHING PARTY OF EXILES PASSING A TRAIN OF FREIGHT-SLEDGES.

SIBERIA AND THE EXILE SYSTEM

BY GEORGE KENNAN

VOLUME TWO

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SIBERIA AND THE EXILE SYSTEM

SIBERIA AND THE EXILE SYSTEM

CHAPTER I

PRISONS AND EXILES IN IRKÚTSK

IT was so late when we reached Irkútsk Sunday afternoon, and we were so tired from our thousand-mile ride, that we did not attempt to do anything except bathe, change our clothing, dine, and go to bed. Monday, after we had sent our passports to the police-station, Mr. Frost strolled down to the river-side to make some sketches, while I went out to look at the city and find, if possible, a certain political exile to whom I had a letter of introduction.

Irkútsk is situated on the right, or northern, bank of the Angará, about forty miles from the point where that navigable river flows out of Lake Baikál. At the time of our visit it had a population of 36,000, and was therefore the largest city in Siberia. It contained an excellent weekly newspaper,[1] a public library, a branch of the Imperial Geographical Society, a good theater, and about thirty public schools, and the business of its merchants, traders, and manufacturers amounted annually to more than 11,000,000 *rúbles*. The city had not yet recovered from the great fire of July, 1879, which destroyed nearly 4000 buildings, rendered homeless 15,000 people, and consumed property valued

[1] The *Sibír*, edited by Mr. M. V. Zagóskin. After a long struggle with the press censorship, this enterprising and ably conducted newspaper has finally been suppressed.

at 20,000,000 *rúbles*. Traces of this fire were still to be seen in many parts of the city, and even where such traces were not visible the streets and buildings had a raggedness and newness that suggested a rapidly growing frontier mining

EXTENSION OF VIEW BELOW.

town rather than a city founded in 1652. Generally speaking, it seemed to me a much less interesting and attractive place than when I saw it first in 1867. One of the most curious, and apparently one of the oldest, buildings spared by the fire was a massive stone powder-magazine, which stood on the outskirts of the open-air bazar in the midst of

IRKÚTSK FROM THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE ANGARÁ.

the lower half of the city. Its roof was overgrown with grass and weeds; its sides were incrusted with the barnacle-like stalls and booths of retail traders, and around it, during all the busy hours of the day, surged a throng of Buriáts, Mongols, Cossacks, and Russian peasants, who seemed to be buying or bargaining for all sorts of mer-

chandise, from a *tárantás* or a *teléga* to a second-hand pair of boots.

After exploring the bazar, rambling about the city for two or three hours, and delivering some of my letters of introduction, I returned to the hotel. Zhan, with a perturbed countenance, met me in the hall and informed me that the chief of police had just been there after us and had left a verbal request that we call upon him at once. Zhan's experience of life had evidently convinced him that a visit from the chief of police, like the appearance of a stormy petrel at sea, was a threatening phenomenon; and although he asked no questions, he looked at me with some bewilderment and anxiety. Upon going to our room I found two cards bearing the name of Christopher Fómich Makófski, the Irkútsk chief of police, a gentleman with whom we were destined to become somewhat intimately acquainted, and an officer who had been connected with one of the ghastliest tragedies in the recent history of political exile—the hunger strike in the Irkútsk prison. So far as I could remember, there had been nothing suspicious in our movements since our arrival in Irkútsk, and I was at a loss to know why we were so soon "wanted"; but I had always made it a rule in Russia to obey promptly the first summons of the police, and in less than ten minutes Mr. Frost and I were on our way to Captain Makófski's house. Learning that he was not at home, we left cards and drove to the central police-station. He was not there. Having thus done all that we could, we returned to the hotel, and Mr. Frost went out again to sketch the old powder-magazine shown

BOATS ON THE ANGARÁ.

in the illustration on the opposite page. Half an hour later Zhan appeared with a dejected air, holding gingerly between his fingers another card of the chief of police, who, he said, was waiting in the corridor and wished to see us. This second call within two hours surprised me a little, but of course I told Zhan to show the chief of police in. I heard quick footsteps and the jingle of spurs in the hall, and in another instant Captain Makófski, in full uniform, entered the room. I was prepared for something unpleasant, and rose from my chair fully expecting to meet a man with a stern official face who would look at me suspiciously and either tell me that there was something wrong with my passport, or else inquire how long and for what purpose I had been looking up political exiles. Imagine my surprise to see a rather handsome officer of middle age, with good features, blue eyes, closely cut hair, and a full brown beard, who advanced to meet me with outstretched hand, and whose face fairly beamed with smiling cordiality as he said: "I am Makófski, the chief of police. I have the pleasure of knowing you by reputation,—I have read your book,—and when an eminent foreign traveler comes to Siberia to study the country, I regard it as only my duty to call upon him and offer my services."

I was so nearly paralyzed with astonishment at this wholly unexpected greeting that for a moment I could hardly reply; but I managed to thank him and ask him to take a seat. We had a pleasant chat of ten minutes with regard to the roads, the weather, our Siberian experiences, the changed appearance of Irkútsk, etc., and then Captain Makófski said: "I understand that you are interested, among other things, in prisons and the exile system. I think you will find the city prison here in good condition. I will send some one to show you through it, and I will not forewarn the prison officers that you are coming—you shall see it just as it is every day."

"This," I said to myself, "is the kind of chief of police that every well-regulated Siberian city ought to have."

OLD POWDER-MAGAZINE AND BAZAR, IRKÚTSK.

In the general discussion of the exile system which followed, Captain Makófski admitted that it was a great burden to the country and an evil thing in itself, but he said that there did not seem to be any prospect of its speedy abolition.

"The chief difficulty in the way," he said, "is the financial difficulty. The adoption of a central prison system in European Russia in place of the exile system has been suggested and discussed, but the change would necessitate the building of twenty large new prisons at a cost of about ten million *rúbles*, and the financial condition of the country is such as to render this impracticable."

While we were talking Mr. Frost came in, and after some further general conversation the chief of police took his leave, urging us to call upon him informally and soon. I could not at this interview fully make up my mind with regard to his character and motives. He seemed to be everything that was amiable; but there was a suggestion of surface artificiality about his beaming smile and a touch of exaggeration in his complimentary deference which suggested diplomacy rather than perfect sincerity. I felt, however, that I had no right on this ground to throw stones at anybody, since I myself was living in a very large and very fragile glass house.

On Wednesday we returned Captain Makófski's call, and Thursday afternoon he came to our hotel to escort us to the prisons. The general city prison and the forwarding prison of Irkútsk are situated side by side a little out of the busy part of the city, from which they are separated by a small shallow stream called the Ushakófka. The forwarding prison, which at Captain Makófski's suggestion we visited first, proved to be nothing more than a large but old and half-decayed *étape*, varying from the usual roadside type of such buildings only in size and in the arrangement of its *kámeras*. One could see at a glance that it was in very bad repair. The logs in some places had rotted almost entirely

away; the stockade around the courtyard looked old and weather-beaten; and in almost every window one or more panes of glass had been broken out and the holes had been stopped with rags, old clothes, or pieces of coarse dirty matting. Captain Makófski, observing that I noticed these things, said in explanation of them that it had not been thought best to make extensive repairs, because there was a plan under consideration for the erection of a new building.[1] As we entered the main corridor the officer of the day sprang hastily to the door, saluted the warden, who was with us, and in a sort of rapid, monotonous recitative said, without once taking breath, "Your-High-Nobility-I-have-the-honor-to-report-that-the-condition-of-the-Irkútsk-forwarding-prison-on-this-the-fifth-day-of-September-1885-is-blagopoluchno [prosperous or satisfactory] and-that-it-now-contains-271-prisoners." The warden nodded his head, said "All right," and we began our inspection of the prison. It seemed to me an extremely dreary, gloomy, and neglected place. Its *kámeras* did not differ essentially from those in the forwarding prison of Tomsk, except that they were less crowded. Most of them were fairly well lighted, they were warmed by large square brick ovens, and they contained no furniture except low plank sleeping-platforms of the usual type. The prisoners had no bedding except their overcoats, and in a few cases small thin "crazy quilts" about two feet wide and six feet long, which they had evidently made for themselves out of countless hoarded rags and scraps of cloth, and which they used to spread down upon and thus soften a little the hard planks of the *nári.* I did not see a blanket nor a pillow in the prison. The *kámeras* contained from twenty to forty men each, and the heavy foulness of the air showed that there was little or no ventilation. The floors, judged by Siberian standards, were not disgracefully dirty, but they had been freshly sprinkled with white sand

[1] Three years later a new forwarding prison, intended to take the place of this, was erected in the village of Alexándrofsk, a short distance north of Irkútsk. (See Appendix G.)

in evident anticipation of our visit. Throughout the prison the men seemed to be wholly separated from the women and children, and in the *kámeras* devoted to the latter there was less overcrowding, more cleanliness, and purer air.

From the forwarding prison we went to the general city prison, which stood about a hundred yards away on the same street, and which consisted of a large two-story building of brick covered with white stucco and roofed with tin. In general type it resembled a little the forwarding prison of Tiumén; but it differed from the latter in having an interior courtyard 75 or 100 feet square which, by means of graveled walks and prim geometrical flower-beds, had been turned into a sort of garden and which served as a place of exercise for the inmates. This prison was erected in 1861 at a cost of 62,000 *rúbles*, and was intended to accommodate 450 prisoners. At the time of our visit it held 743, and the warden admitted to me that it sometimes contained 1500. According to Mr. S. S. Popóf, who made a special study of this prison and who wrote a monograph upon it for the newspaper *Sibír*, no less than 2000 prisoners have at times been packed into its *kámeras*. In other words, every cell has been made to hold more than four times the number of prisoners for which it was intended.[1] The results of such overcrowding I have already described several times in my sketches of other Siberian prisons. The air in the *kámeras* was somewhat less poisonous than in the forwarding prison of Tiumén, but it was nevertheless very foul, and many piteous complaints of it were made by the prisoners, both to Captain Makófski and to me, as we passed through the cells. The condition of the atmosphere in the overcrowded and badly ventilated hospital seemed to me to be something terrible. Although we went through only two or three wards, and that hastily, and although I held my breath

[1] "The Prisoners of the Irkútsk Prison Castle, and their Maintenance," by S. S. Popóf, Annual of the newspaper *Sibír*, p. 210. Irkútsk, 1876.

almost to the point of suffocation rather than take such terribly polluted air into my lungs, I came out feeling faint, sick, and giddy.[1]

The prevalent diseases here, as in other Siberian prisons, were typhus fever, scurvy, anemia, rheumatism, and bronchitis—all of them disorders pointing to unfavorable sanitary conditions.

From the hospital we crossed the little interior garden to the so-called "secret" or solitary-confinement cells, where the chief of police said there was one political prisoner with whom he would allow me to talk. I had already heard much of the prison life of the Russian revolutionists, but I had not as yet seen a single one actually in solitary confinement. Entering a sort of hall at one corner of the courtyard, Captain Makófski, accompanied by a turnkey, preceded us through a locked and grated door into a long, narrow corridor, where an armed sentry was pacing back and forth in front of a row of cells. The heavy wooden doors of these cells were secured by padlocks, and in the middle of every one was a small square aperture through which food could be passed and the prisoner be watched by the guard. The name of the political offender whom we were about to visit was Ferdinand Liústig,—formerly an army officer, Captain Makófski thought,—who had been arrested in St. Petersburg in March, 1881, soon after the assassination of the late Tsar. He had been tried as a revolutionist, had been sentenced to four years of penal servitude, had finished his term, and was on his way from the mines of Karà to some place in Eastern Siberia, where he was to be settled as a forced colonist.

The turnkey unlocked and threw open a door marked "No. 6," and we stepped into a long but narrow and gloomy cell, where a good-looking young man with closely cut hair, blue eyes, and a full brown beard was sitting in a dejected attitude upon a small wooden bed. He rose hastily when

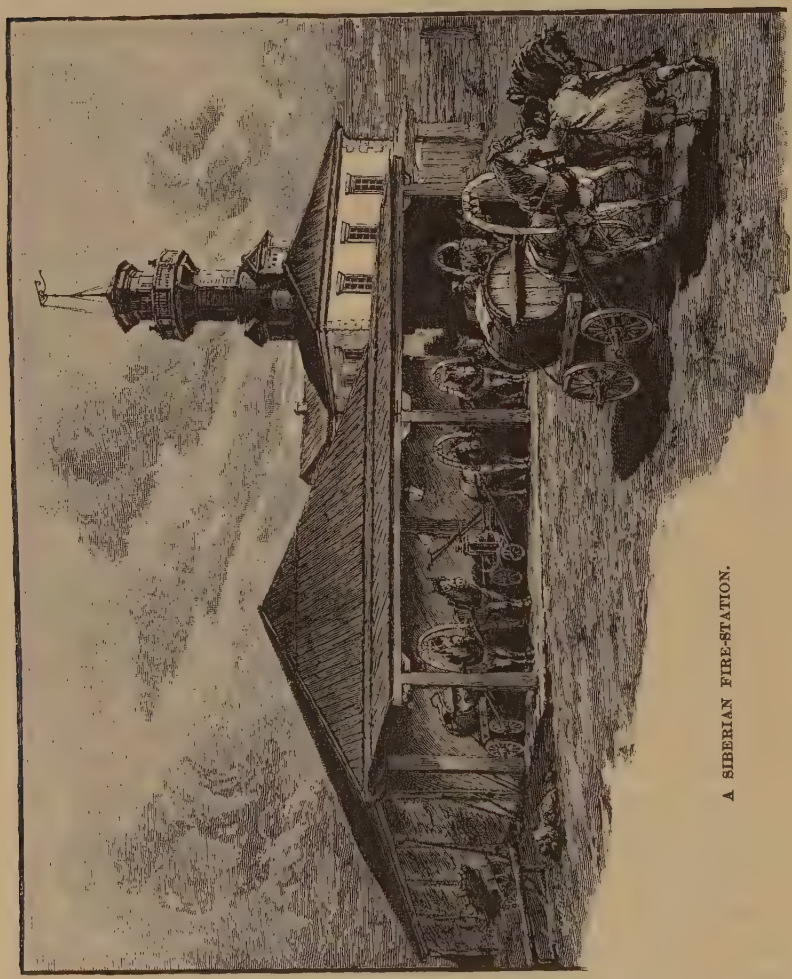
[1] See statements with regard to this prison in Appendix G.

we entered, as if he were anticipating some change in his fortunes, and Captain Makófski, with an air of hearty good-fellowship, exclaimed: "Good afternoon, Mr. Liústig! We have come to cheer you up a little. These are American travelers who have been looking through the prison, and I thought that perhaps you would like to see them." The transient expression of hope and expectancy in the young man's face slowly faded as he shook hands with us, and his manner became nervous and embarrassed, as if he had been isolated so long from all human society that he hardly knew how to talk or what to say. The situation was an awkward one, even for me, on account of the presence of Captain Makófski, the turnkey, and a soldier. If Mr. Liústig and I had been alone together, we should soon have come to an understanding and should undoubtedly have talked for hours; but under existing circumstances I could say nothing that I wished to say, and felt conscious that I must appear to him like a mere tourist, who had come to look at a "nihilist" in prison, as one might look at a new species of wild animal in a zoölogical garden. The cell occupied by Mr. Liústig was about 20 feet long by 6 feet wide and 12 feet high. It was lighted by one very small barred window in the end wall opposite the door. This window, which was so high that I could not reach it, would have opened upon the little garden in the courtyard, had not a high stockade been erected in front of it at a distance of a few feet. The stockade hid not only the whole outside world, but even the sky, so that Mr. Liústig could hardly tell, by looking up at his little window, whether the weather was clear or stormy—whether it was winter or summer. Although the walls and ceiling had been whitewashed, the cell was dark and gloomy, and it seemed to me, moreover, to be very cold. It contained no furniture except a small wooden bedstead covered with a thin gray blanket, and a square box in which there was a pail or bucket for excrement. The prisoner was not allowed to have chair, table,

books, or writing-materials; he could not get even so much as a glimpse of the outside world; and he had absolutely nothing to do except to sit on his bed in that gloomy prison twilight and think. I asked him how long he had been there, and he replied, "Since the 1st of June"—nearly four months. He was detained, Captain Makófski said, to await the decision of a question that had been raised as to the place where he should be colonized. How soon his case would be reached in the Circumlocution Office of the Government nobody knew, and apparently nobody cared. Meanwhile his condition was worse than if he had been in penal servitude. I wished very much to ask him a few questions with regard to his life at the mines of Karâ; but I knew that it would be useless to interrogate him in the presence of Captain Makófski, and so, after shaking hands with him again and wishing him a speedy release, I bade him good-by. Ten minutes later, as it was beginning to grow dark in the prison, and as I had seen all that I cared to see, we returned to our hotel. I could not agree with Captain Makófski that the Irkûtsk prisons were "in good condition"; but as he did not ask me what I thought of them, I volunteered no opinion.

After we had finished our inspection of the prisons Captain Makófski asked me if I would not like to see the calling out of the fire command at one of the stations. I replied, of course, that I should be very glad to see it. We drove to the fire-engine-house of the second municipal district, and Captain Makófski shouted to the watchman in the fire tower "Trevóga!" [Alarm!]. The watchman pulled a long rope stretched between the tower and the engine-house, and in just two and a half minutes, out came the fire command ready for action. First appeared the guide,—a fireman mounted on a fine gray horse,—next came the engine, a rather clumsy English machine with hand-brakes drawn by two spirited horses, then four large barrels mounted on wheels, and finally a hook-and-ladder truck. The fire com-

mand consisted of twenty or twenty-five men in gray uniform and big brass helmets. They went a short distance up the street and came back at a tearing gallop, raising a cloud



A SIBERIAN FIRE-STATION.

of dust, and attracting an immense crowd of spectators. They then returned, limbered up the engine, and threw a stream of water to the top of the fire tower. The exhibition as a whole was fairly creditable for a provincial town.

The men and horses were well drilled and the service was good, but the supply of water furnished by the train of barrels seemed to be absurdly inadequate. It took one barrelful of water merely to fill the service-pipe. After the fire command had been dismissed with our compliments and thanks we drove back to our hotel.

Several days elapsed before I saw the chief of police again, and in the mean time a visit of inspection was made to the prisons by Count Ignátief, the newly appointed Governor-general of Eastern Siberia, who had just assumed the duties of his position. Tuesday of the following week Captain Makófski called upon us, and after the interchange of a few unimportant remarks said to me with some eagerness, "Mr. Kennan, please tell me frankly what impression was made upon you the other day by our prisons." I told him frankly that Siberian prisons generally made upon me a very bad impression, and that all I could truthfully say of the prisons in Irkútsk was that they were a little better—that is, somewhat less bad—than the prisons in Tiumén and Tomsk.

"I asked the question," he resumed, "because Count Ignátief and his wife have just made a visit of inspection and they are terribly dissatisfied. The Count finds the prisons dirty and overcrowded, the air foul and bad, the linen of the prisoners dirty and coarse, and the state of things unsatisfactory generally. Of course I know myself that the air in the *kámeras* is foul; but if you have to put thirty men into a room like this [indicating our hotel room], how can you keep the air pure? It is very true also that the linen of the prisoners is cheap and coarse, but it is the best that can be had for the money that the Government allows. If you go to a hotel and pay two *rúbles* for a dinner, you have a right to expect a good one; but what can you expect if you pay only eight *kopéks?* As for the prisoners' linen being dirty—of course it 's dirty! The Government gives a prisoner only one shirt every six months and one *khalát* [gray overcoat] every year. In these clothes he lives and sleeps twenty-four

hours a day and thirty days a month without once taking them off except to bathe — of course they get dirty!"

"If a prisoner has no spare clothing," I inquired, "how does he get his one shirt washed? Does he never wash it, or does he go half the time naked?"

"When he visits the bath-house," replied Captain Makófski, "he usually washes at the same time his body and his clothing, dries the latter as best he can, and puts it on again — he has no change."

I referred to the sufferings of exiles who are compelled to sleep in wet clothing after every rain-storm on the road, and said I did not wonder that the hospitals of the forwarding prisons were crowded with the sick. He assented and said, "The life of prisoners on the road is awful. So far as the condition of the prisons here depends upon me," he continued after a moment's pause, "it is as good as circumstances will permit. There are no accumulations of filth anywhere, and the sanitary condition of the buildings is as good as I can make it — better perhaps than that of many private houses in the city."

It was interesting and instructive to me to see how unconscious Captain Makófski seemed to be of the existence of any very extraordinary evils in the Irkútsk prisons. Apparently he had grown so accustomed to the state of things there that it seemed to him to be nearly if not quite normal, and it gave him a sort of mental shock to find that the new Governor-general was so dissatisfied with the prisons and their management. He attributed this dissatisfaction, however, largely to the influence of the Countess Ignátief, whom he characterized as a kind-hearted but inexperienced lady who did not appreciate the difficulties in the way of such a system of prison administration as she desired to bring about.

"The Countess, however," I said, "seems to be a lady of quick perceptions and unusually good sense. An officer of the exile administration whom I met at dinner yesterday

told me that during the visit of the Governor-general and his wife to the prisons the other day the Countess asked to be shown some of the prisoners' soup. The warden brought some to her in a clean fresh plate, but she evidently thought that it had been especially prepared for the occasion. She therefore declined to taste it, and asked whether there had not been left in the bottom of the kettle some soup from the prisoners' dinner. Upon examination some soup was found there, and she desired that a spoonful of it be given to her. She tasted it, and then, handing back the spoon, remarked to the warden quietly, 'I 'm glad to see that you are washing out that kettle—it ought to have been washed long ago.' Now, you can't say," I concluded, "that such a lady as that does n't know something about your prisons, and that she is n't very observing."

"Observing—observing!" exclaimed Captain Makófski, "that may all be; she is a very kind-hearted and benevolent lady, but she is impractical. She thinks that a common criminal prison ought to be in as good condition all the time as a young ladies' institute—and you and I know that that is utterly impossible."

I said that I thought the Irkútsk prisons might be improved a good deal without bringing them up anywhere near the level of a young ladies' institute.

Our conversation was interrupted at this point by the entrance of callers, and Captain Makófski took his leave, evidently somewhat disturbed by the attitude that the new Governor-general had taken towards the prisons.

On Count Ignátief's first public reception day Mr. Frost and I called upon him, partly as a mark of respect and partly with the hope that he might be willing to talk about the exile system and the penal institutions of the city. We found him to be a large, somewhat corpulent man about forty-five years of age, with a massive, nearly bald head and a strong but heavy and almost lethargic face. He received us courteously but formally, and began to talk to

us at once in English, which language he spoke fairly well but with some hesitation. At the first favorable opportunity I expressed my interest in the exile system and ventured to give him the results of some of my observations in the prisons of Tiumén and Tomsk and on the road. He responded without any apparent hesitation, and said frankly that he believed the exile system to be very prejudicial to all the interests of Siberia, and that in many respects it needed modification. He thought that the common criminal exiles ought to be utilized as laborers. There was plenty of useful work to be done in Siberia, and he could see no reason why the convict exiles should not be compelled to do it. A system of enforced labor would be better for them than the present method of keeping them shut up in prisons in idleness or turning them loose as colonists, and it certainly would be better for the country. He was about to take a step in this direction, he said, by setting one hundred convicts to work in the streets of Irkútsk. I spoke of the overcrowding of the prisons and *étapes* along the great exile road, and he admitted that they were too small and in very bad condition. He said that a plan was under consideration for the transportation of exiles from Tomsk to Irkútsk in summer only and in wagons. This would relieve the Government from the expense of providing them with winter clothing, it would greatly diminish the amount of suffering, and it would perhaps be more economical.[1]

While we were discussing this subject the Governor-general's wife came in to hand him a letter, and we were presented to her. She was a woman perhaps thirty years of age, of medium height, with brown hair, gray eyes, and a good, strong, intelligent, but somewhat impassive face. The appearance of the Countess Ignátief interrupted our discussion of the exile system, and, as we were making a merely formal call upon the Governor-general, we had no opportunity for renewing it.

[1] I shall have occasion to refer to this plan in a later chapter.

In the course of the twelve days that we spent in Irkútsk we made many pleasant and interesting acquaintances, among them Mr. Adam Bukófski, a well-known East-Siberian mining proprietor, who spoke English well and whose hospitable home was always open to us; Dr. Písaref, a well-known physician of the city, to whom we brought a letter of introduction from St. Petersburg; Mr. Bútin, formerly of Nérchinsk, who had traveled extensively in the United States and who was half an American in his ideas and sympathies, and Mr. Zagóskin, the venerable editor of the newspaper *Sibír*.

On the 21st of September, a little more than a week after our arrival, we were overtaken by our countryman Lieutenant Schuetze, who was on his way to the province of Yakútsk with the gifts sent by our Government to the people of that province who had aided and succored the survivors of the Arctic exploring steamer *Jeannette*. He had left America long after our departure, and it was a very great pleasure to us to meet him in that far-away part of the world, to hear his New York and Washington news, and to compare our respective experiences of Siberian travel.

A few days after my talk with Captain Makófski about the Irkútsk prisons, I called upon him at his house, and drew him into conversation upon the subject of political exile. He spoke very bitterly, almost contemptuously, of the revolutionists and "nihilists" generally, and seemed to regard most of them as wild fanatics, who were opposed, not only to the present form of government in the empire, but to government in any form, and who therefore should be put down with a strong hand. He said he once asked one of them, an exiled lady, what government she and her companions would establish in Russia if they had their way—a limited monarchy, a republic, a commune, or what? She replied that all men had been created free and equal, and that any kind of government was a violence done to individual liberty. "This, of course," said Captain Makófski, "was simply nonsense."

"There are several classes of political exiles, however," he continued, "for whom I have a great deal of pity and sympathy. In the first place, there are the young people who have never committed political crime themselves, but have happened to be in innocent correspondence with real revolutionists or upon terms of some intimacy with them. They have to suffer merely for being in bad company. In the second place, there are people who, to oblige friends or acquaintances, take charge temporarily of packages or satchels without ascertaining their contents. These packages, upon seizure by the police, are found to contain seditious proclamations, dynamite, or something of that sort. It is of no use for the innocent possessor of such a package to explain how it came into his hands, nor to declare that he was ignorant of its contents. He is always exiled. The third class consists of persons who have innocently lent money to revolutionists, the money being afterwards used, without the knowledge or consent of the lenders, for revolutionary purposes. Such men are also exiled, although they may be perfectly innocent of any thought of conspiracy against the Government. Finally, there is a certain class of young men, from eighteen to twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, who are full of ardor and enthusiasm, who really desire the good of their country, who see defects in the present system of government that they think can be remedied, and who desire not revolution, but modification and reorganization. Such young men are almost certain to be drawn into secret societies or revolutionary circles, and then they fall into the hands of the police and are sent to Siberia, although they cannot be called bad men, and all their aims and intentions may be pure and good. I have known many cases in each of these classes, and have always felt very sorry for them."

I have quoted Captain Makófski's words because they are a frank admission that the Russian Government sends to Siberia not only the flower of its youth, but banishes also

at least three classes of people who not only have never committed crime, but are guiltless of any intention to commit crime. I was well aware myself of this fact, but I had never before heard it admitted by a chief of police.

There were not many political exiles in Irkútsk at the time of our visit, and we had some difficulty in finding them. At last, however, we succeeded, without asking the help of Captain Makófski; and although he, as chief of police, was supposed to know everything that was going on, I do not think he dreamed that I sometimes went directly from his house to a place where I met all the political exiles in the city, and that I was spending with them half my nights.

I was surprised to find among the administrative exiles in Irkútsk men and women who had just returned from long terms of banishment in the sub-arctic province of Yakútsk. "How did it happen," I said to one of them, "that you, a mere administrative exile, were sent to the worst part of Eastern Siberia? I thought that the province of Yakútsk was reserved as a place of punishment for the more dangerous class of political offenders, and for compulsory colonists from the mines of the Trans-Baikál."

"That is not quite the case," he replied. "It is true that administrative exiles are usually sent to some part of Western Siberia, but they are frequently transferred afterward to the province of Yakútsk. I myself was sent to Western Siberia in the first place, but in 1881 I was transported to Yakútsk because I would not take the oath of allegiance to Alexander III."

"Do you mean," I said, "that the Government, while punishing you for treason, required you to take an oath of loyalty?"

"Precisely," he replied; "and because I could n't and would n't do it, I was banished to a Yakút *ulús*."[1]

[1] *Ulús* is the name for a native settlement, consisting perhaps of only one or two earth-covered *yurts*, situated in the *taigá*, or primeval wilderness of Yakútsk, sometimes hundreds of miles from the nearest Russian village and more than 5000 miles from St. Petersburg. The gentleman to whom

"But," I exclaimed, "that was not only unjust, but stupid. What was the use of asking a political exile to swear that he was a loyal citizen?"

"There was no use of it," he answered; "but it was done. The Government did not even content itself with exacting an oath of loyalty, but required me to swear that I would tell all I knew about the revolutionary movement; or, in other words, betray my friends. I could not do that, even if I had been changed into a loyal subject by banishment."

Further inquiry elicited the fact, which was then a new one to me, that all administrative exiles who were living in Western Siberia when Alexander III. came to the throne in 1881 were required by the Minister of the Interior to take the oath of allegiance to the new Tsar. It was unreasonable, of course, to expect that men who were already undergoing punishment for disloyalty to Alexander II. would stultify themselves by taking an oath of allegiance to Alexander III.; yet the Minister of the Interior either entertained such an expectation, or else made a pretense of it in order to have an excuse for punishing a second time men who had not committed a second offense. If a criminal whose sentence has been pronounced, and who is already in exile, refuses to admit that his criminal act was wrong, such refusal may be a good reason for not setting him at liberty until the expiration of his penal term; but it is hardly a sufficient reason for arbitrarily increasing threefold the severity of his punishment. It would be regarded as a very remarkable proceeding if the governor of Illinois should go to-morrow

I here refer was sent to an *ulús* in the district of Amgá, only five degrees south of the arctic circle, and reached his destination in December, in the midst of an arctic winter. I have a list of names of seventy-nine political offenders who were living in Yakút *ulúses* in the year 1882, including the Russian novelist Vladímir Korolénko, Professor Bogdanóvitch, who was formerly instructor in chemistry in a university in Austrian Poland, and M. Linóf, who had lived four or five years in the United States and had taken out his first naturalization papers as an American citizen. The list includes also one Frenchman, one German, and nine educated women. The Frenchman and the German had made appeals for help, I believe, to their own Governments, but without result.

to the anarchists sentenced to penal servitude in that State, require them to declare under oath that they were not anarchists, and then, if they refused, drag them out of their cells and hang them off-hand without benefit of clergy. Yet that is precisely analogous to the action that was taken by the Russian Government in the cases of administrative exiles who were living in Western Siberia when the present Tsar came to the throne. If the Minister of the Interior did not know that these men were disloyal, he had no right to punish them with exile. If, on the other hand, he did know that they were disloyal, he acted with cruel injustice in forcing upon them such a choice of alternatives as perjury or a living death in the sub-arctic province of Yakútsk. Scores of exiled men and women, who had committed no new offense, were sent from Western Siberia to Eastern Siberia, or to Yakút *ulúses* near the Asiatic pole of cold, simply because they would not perjure themselves and turn informers. One of these unfortunates was the gifted Russian novelist Vladímir Korolénko. He had already been banished three times,—once to Siberia through an administrative "mistake,"—and he was then transported to the province of Yakútsk because he would not betray his friends, kiss the mailed hand that had smitten him, and swear that he was a loyal subject of "The Lord's Anointed," Alexander III.

The reader may perhaps think that in describing banishment to a Yakút *ulús* as a "living death" I have used too strong an expression. I will therefore describe it as it appears to well-informed and dispassionate Russians. In the early part of the year 1881, when the liberal minister Loris-Melikof was in power and when there existed in Russia a limited freedom of the press, Mr. S. A. Priklónski, a well-known author and a gentleman who served at one time on the staff of the governor of the province of Olónets, published in the liberal newspaper *Zemstvo*—which was shortly afterward suppressed—a long and carefully prepared article

upon exile by administrative process. In that article—a copy of which now lies before me—Mr. Priklónski, over his own signature, uses the following language with regard to the life of political exiles in Yakút *ulúses:*

There exists in the province of Yakútsk a form of exile more severe and more barbarous than anything that the Russian public has yet known, . . . namely, banishment to *ulúses.* This consists in the assignment of administrative exiles separately to residences in scattered Yakút *yurts,* situated sometimes many *versts* one from another. A recent number of the *Russian Gazette* (No. 23), in its correspondence from Yakútsk, publishes the following extract from the letter of an *ulús* exile, which graphically describes the awful situation of an educated human being who has been mercilessly thrown into one of the *yurts* of these arctic savages.

"The Cossacks who had brought me from the town of Yakútsk to my destination soon returned, and I was left alone among Yakúts who do not understand a word of Russian. They watch me constantly, for fear that if I escape they will have to answer for it to the Russian authorities. If I go out of the close atmosphere of the solitary *yurt* to walk, I am followed by a suspicious Yakút. If I take an ax to cut myself a cane, the Yakút directs me by gestures and pantomime to let it alone and go back into the *yurt.* I return thither, and before the fireplace I see a Yakút who has stripped himself naked, and is hunting for lice in his clothing—a pleasant picture! The Yakúts live in winter in the same buildings with their cattle, and frequently are not separated from the latter even by the thinnest partition. The excrement of the cattle and of the children; the inconceivable disorder and filth; the rotting straw and rags; the myriads of vermin in the bedding; the foul, oppressive air, and the impossibility of speaking a word of Russian—all these things taken together are positively enough to drive one insane. The food of the Yakúts can hardly be eaten. It is carelessly prepared, without salt, often of tainted materials, and the unaccustomed stomach rejects it with nausea. I have no separate dishes or clothing of my own; there are no facilities for bathing, and during the whole winter—eight months—I am as dirty as a Yakút. I cannot go anywhere—least of all to the town, which is two hundred *versts* distant. I live with the Yakúts by turns—staying with one family for six weeks, and then going for the same length of time to another. I have

nothing to read,—neither books nor newspapers,—and I know nothing of what is going on in the world.

Beyond this [says Mr. Priklónski in commenting upon the letter] severity cannot go. Beyond this there remains nothing to do but to tie a man to the tail of a wild horse, and drive him into the steppe, or chain him to a corpse and leave him to his fate. One does not wish to believe that a human being can be subjected, without trial and by a mere executive order, to such grievous torment—to a punishment which European civilization has banished from its penal code even for the most desperate class of villains whose inhuman crimes have been proved by trial in a criminal court. And yet we are assured by the correspondent of the *Russian Gazette* that up to this time none of the exiles in the province of Yakútsk have been granted any alleviating privileges; ten newly arrived administratives have been distributed,—most of them among the *ulúses*,—and more are expected in the near future:[1]

The statements made in Mr. Priklónski's article are supported by private letters, now in my possession, from *ulús* exiles, by the concurrent testimony of a large number of politicals who have lived through this experience, and by

[1] Since Mr. Priklónski, the fearless and talented author of this article, is now dead, I may say, without fear of injuring him, that he himself gave me the copy of it that I now have, together with a quantity of other manuscript material relating to exile by administrative process. He was a man of high character and more than ordinary ability, and is well and favorably known in Russia as the author of "Sketches of Self-government," published in 1884; "Popular Life in the North," which appeared in 1886; and a large number of articles upon local self-government and the condition of the Russian peasantry, printed from time to time in the journals *The Week*, *Zemstvo*, and *Russian Thought*. Mr. Priklónski was not a revolutionist, and the article from which I have made quotations was not published in a revolutionary sheet. It appeared in the *Zemstvo*, the unofficial organ of the Russian provincial assemblies, which was at that time under the editorial management of the well-known author and publicist Mr. V. U. Skalon. I mention these facts merely to show that if the Russian Government cared anything about the condition of political exiles in the province of Yakútsk, it had no excuse for inaction. Its attention was called to the subject by persons who did not seek to escape responsibility for their words, and by citizens whose abilities and patriotic services entitled them to a respectful hearing. As the Minister of the Interior has continued to send educated human beings to Yakút *ulúses* from that time to this, he has made it impossible for the civilized world to draw any other conclusion than that he consciously and deliberately intends to subject men and women, without trial or hearing, to the miseries set forth in the letter from which Mr. Priklónski quotes.

my own personal observation. I have myself slept in sod-covered Yakút *yurts* side by side with cattle; I have borne some of the hardships of life in these wretched habitations, and I know how intolerable it must be for a refined and educated human being—and especially for a woman—to spend months or years in the midst of such an environment. It must be said, however, in fairness, that some administrative exiles, who are allowed to receive money from their friends, buy or build houses for themselves, and have a somewhat more endurable existence. The Russian novelist Korolénko occupied a house of his own, apart from the Yakúts, and a number of the returned *ulús* exiles whose acquaintance I made in Tomsk and Irkútsk told me that, with the aid of friends, they bought, built, or hired log houses in the *ulúses* to which they had been banished, and thus escaped the filth and disorder of the Yakút *yurts*. Some of them, too, had a few books, and received letters from their relatives once or twice a year, through the police. They suffered, nevertheless, great hardships and privations. Mr. Linóf, a cultivated gentleman who had resided several years in the United States and who spoke English well, told me that after his banishment to the province of Yakútsk he sometimes lived for months at a time without bread, subsisting for the most part upon fish and meat. His health was broken down by his experience, and he died at an East Siberian *étape* in May, 1886, less than six months after I made his acquaintance. That the life of *ulús* exiles, even under the most favorable circumstances, is almost an unendurable one sufficiently appears from the frequency with which they escape from it by self-destruction. Of the seventy-nine politicals who were in exile in the province of Yakútsk in 1882, six had committed suicide previous to 1885. How many have died in that way since then I do not know, but of the six to whom I refer I have the names.

Since my return from Siberia the Russian Government has been sending political suspects by administrative pro-

cess to the territory of Yakútsk for longer periods than ever. The "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance" provide that the maximum term of exile without trial shall be five years, but since 1888 this term has been extended arbitrarily to ten years, and politically suspicious or untrustworthy persons have been banished without trial for that length of time to the very worst part of the Yakútsk territory, viz., the strictly arctic settlements of Verkhoyánsk and Srédni Kolímsk. Among such exiles, whose names and photographs have been sent to me, are Alexéi Makaréfski, a student from the Veterinary Institute at Kharkof, and another student named Ivan Tsítsenko. The territory of Yakútsk, moreover, has been made, since 1888, the place of banishment for all Jewish suspects, without regard to the nature of their supposed untrustworthiness, and without regard to age or sex. Among such exiles, whose names and photographs have been sent to me, are two young girls, Rosa Frank and Vera Sheftel, who were students in one of the high medical schools for women in St. Petersburg, and who were banished to Srédni Kolímsk for three and five years respectively in 1888. They can hardly expect, of course, to live to return to their homes.

Two of the most interesting politicals whom we met in Irkútsk were Mr. and Mrs. Iván Cherniávski, who were banished to Siberia by administrative process in 1878. I became very well acquainted with them, and for Mrs. Cherniávski especially I came to feel the profoundest pity and regard. Few women, even in Russia, have had before the age of thirty-five so tragic and heart-breaking a life, and still fewer have maintained through hardships, sickness, and bereavement such cheerfulness and courage. She was arrested in Odessa in the early part of 1878 at the age of about twenty-five, and after a long term of imprisonment was sent by administrative process to the province of Tobólsk. In the city prison of Kiev, on her way to Siberia, she was detained for a few days, and while there was

forced to be almost an eye-witness of the assassination of her dearest friend. A young man of English descent named Beverly, whom she had known from childhood, had been arrested shortly before upon the charge of living on a false passport and carrying on a revolutionary propaganda, and he was at that time in the Kiev prison. The night before Mrs. Cherniávski was to resume her journey to Siberia, Beverly, with a comrade named Izbítski, attempted to escape through a tunnel which they had succeeded in digging from their cell to a point outside the prison wall. The prison authorities, however, had in some way become aware of the existence of the tunnel, and had posted a squad of soldiers near the place where the fugitives must emerge from the ground. Late at night, when they made their appearance, they were received with a volley of musketry. Beverly was mortally wounded, and as he lay writhing on the ground he was despatched by a soldier with repeated bayonet-thrusts. Izbítski, wounded and severely beaten, was taken back into prison. The next morning when Mrs. Cherniávski started with her party for Siberia she had to march past the bloody and disfigured body of her dearest friend, which was still lying where it had fallen, in plain sight of the prison windows.

"I can bear my own personal torment," she said to me with a sob as she finished the story of this tragedy, "but such things as that break my heart."

I need not recount the hardships and miseries that she, a cultivated and refined woman, endured on the road and in the roadside *étapes* between Kiev and the small town in the Siberian province of Tobólsk where she and her husband had been assigned a residence. They reached their destination at last; a child was there born to them, and they lived there in something like comfort until March, 1881, when Alexander III. came to the throne and Mr. Cherniávski was required to take the oath of allegiance. He refused to do so, and they were sent farther eastward to the town of

Krasnoyársk. A second refusal to take the oath of allegiance resulted in their being sent to Irkútsk. By this time winter had set in, and they were traveling in an open *tárantás* with a delicate baby thirteen months of age. It was with the greatest difficulty that Mrs. Cherniávski could keep her baby warm, and at the last station before reaching Irkútsk she removed the heavy wrappings in which she had enveloped it and found it dead. With the shock of this discovery she became delirious, and wept, sang pathetic little nursery songs to her dead child, rocked it in her arms, and prayed and cursed God by turns. In the courtyard of the Irkútsk forwarding prison, in a temperature of thirty degrees below zero, Mr. Cherniávski stood for half an hour waiting for the party to be formally received, with his wife raving in delirium beside him and his dead child in his arms.

Mrs. Cherniávski lay in the prison hospital at Irkútsk until she recovered her reason, and to some extent her strength, and then she and her husband were sent 2000 miles farther to the northeastward under guard of gendarmes, and colonized in a Yakút settlement known as the Batarúski *ulús*, situated in the *taigá* or primeval wilderness of Yakútsk, 165 miles from the nearest town. There, suffering almost every conceivable hardship and privation, they lived until 1884, when the Minister of the Interior allowed them to return to a more civilized part of Siberia.

Mrs. Cherniávski when I made her acquaintance was a pale, delicate, hollow-cheeked woman, whose health had been completely wrecked by years of imprisonment, banishment, and grief. She had had two children, and had lost them both in exile under circumstances that made the bereavement almost intolerable; for seven years she had been separated by a distance of many thousand miles from all of her kindred; and the future seemed to hold for her absolutely nothing except the love of the husband whose exile she could still share, but whose interest she could do so little

in her broken state of health to promote. She had not been able to step outside the house for two months, and it seemed to me, when I bade her good-by, that her life of unhappiness and suffering was drawing to a close. I felt profoundly sorry for her,—while listening to her story my face was wet with tears almost for the first time since boyhood,—and hoping to give her some pleasure and to show her how sincerely I esteemed her and how deeply I sympathized with her, I offered her my photograph, as the only memento I could leave with her. To my great surprise she sadly but firmly declined it, and said, "Many years ago I had a photograph of a little child that I had lost. It was the only one in existence, and I could not get another. The police made a search one night in my house, and took away all my letters and photographs. I told them that this particular picture was the only portrait I had of my dead boy. The gendarme officer who conducted the search promised me upon his word of honor that it should be returned to me, but I never saw it again. I made a vow then that it should not be possible for the Russian Government to hurt me so a second time, and from that day to this I have never had a photograph in my possession."

I do not know whether Mrs. Cherniávski is now living or dead; but if she be still living, I trust that these pages may find their way to her and show her that on the other side of the world she is still remembered with affectionate sympathy.

CHAPTER II

UNDER POLICE SURVEILLANCE

IN order that I may set forth in a connected and intelligible form the results of my investigation of the Russian exile system, I find myself compelled, at this point, to break the continuity of my narrative, and to bring together, in a single chapter, a quantity of material relating to only one branch of my subject, but gathered piecemeal, at different times and in many widely separated parts of Siberia. To present a large number of closely related facts in the chronological order in which they were obtained would be to scatter them through half a dozen chapters, and thus deprive them of much of their cumulative force and significance. It seems best, therefore, to group such facts in a single chapter dealing exclusively with that particular feature of the subject to which they all relate. In a previous chapter, entitled "Exiled by Administrative Process," I grouped a number of related facts to show the working of what is known in Russia as the "administrative" banishment of political offenders. I purpose, in the present chapter, to group in a similar way a few facts with regard to the life of political offenders under police surveillance in the places to which they have been administratively banished.

The forcible deportation of "politically untrustworthy" citizens by executive order and without trial first became common in the later years of the reign of Alexander II. Administrative banishment had been resorted to, as I have said, before that time as a means of getting rid of obnoxious

persons, but in 1878 and 1879, when the struggle between the police and the terrorists grew hot and fierce, exile by administrative process became a common thing, and people who were known to hold liberal opinions, or who were thought to be in sympathy with the revolutionary movement, were sent to Siberia by the score. If forbidden books, or copies of the "Messenger of the Will of the People," were found by the police in a young man's room, the fact was regarded as a sufficient warrant for his banishment. If an enthusiastic university student, inspired with an unselfish desire to do something to elevate the lower classes, ventured to open an evening school for factory operatives in the suburbs of St. Petersburg, he was sent to Siberia by administrative process. If a dozen or more young people were surprised together at night under suspicious circumstances, their names were recorded in the "untrustworthy" list of the police, and the next time the Government found it necessary to "take more vigorous measures for the preservation of public order," these unfortunate young men and women, who perhaps had assembled merely to read and discuss the works of Herbert Spencer or of John Stuart Mill, were arrested and sent to Siberia as conspirators. Friends and relatives of convicted revolutionists were banished by administrative process as a matter of course, and long before the assassination of Alexander II. six or eight hundred young people, representing all classes and all social grades, had been swept into the prisons by the drag-net of the police, and sent thence to Siberia by administrative process without even the pretense of a trial.[1] Before the end of the year 1889 there was hardly a town or large village in Western Siberia that did not contain administrative exiles, and there were whole colonies of such offenders in

[1] In 1882 the number of persons who had been dealt with by administrative process and were living under police surveillance was officially given as 1500. Most of these people were in exile. (Review of the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," in magazine *Juridical Messenger*, p. 557. Moscow, December, 1882.)

Tára, Tiukalínsk, Ishím, Yalútorfsk, Semipalátinsk, Kókchetav, Akmolínsk, Kurgán, Surgút, Ust Kámenogórsk, Omsk, Tomsk, and Berózof.

No rules for the government of these exiles were at that time in force. Banishment by administrative process was, in a certain sense, an extra-legal measure—a measure not defined and regulated by legislative enactment, but rather set in operation and directed by personal impulse. As a natural consequence it was pliant, changeable, and wholly subservient to the will of the higher authorities. By administrative process a man might be banished to Siberia for a year, for ten years, or for life; he might be sent to the hot sun-scorched plains of the Írtish, or to the snowy wilderness of Yakútsk; he might be treated like an infant ward, like a forced colonist, or like a hard-labor convict; and, as against the Minister of the Interior, he had not a single legally sanctioned and enforceable right. His situation was in many respects worse than that of a common felon. The latter knew at least how long and for what reason he had to suffer; his political status was definitely fixed by law, and to some extent he was protected by law from capricious ill-treatment at the hands of petty Siberian officials. The administrative exile, however, had no such protection. He stood wholly outside the pale of promulgated law; his term of banishment was not fixed, but could be indefinitely extended by the authorities at pleasure; he had no ascertainable rights, either as a citizen or as a criminal, and no means of knowing whether the local officials in dealing with him overstepped or did not overstep the limits of their rightful authority. The only checks upon their power, so far as he was concerned, were the "secret" letters of instruction that they received now and then from the Minister of the Interior. Even these checks were nominal rather than real, since the letters were often inconsistent one with another; they did not provide for half of the multifarious cases that arose; and the local authorities,

when in doubt, acted upon their own judgment, and when irritated or excited disregarded the letters of instruction altogether. The natural results of such a state of affairs were confusion, disorder, and constant abuse of power. In one place the administrative exiles were required to appear every day at the police-station, sign their names in a book, and report personally to the *isprávnik;* in another place they were subjected to a constant and humiliating surveillance, which did not respect even the privacy of young women's bedrooms. One *isprávnik* would allow them to earn a little money by teaching or practising medicine, while another would throw them into prison for merely giving a music lesson or prescribing a single dose of quinine. An exile in Ust Kámenogórsk might go three or four miles from his place of banishment without receiving so much as a reprimand, while another exile, in Ishím, might be sent to an *ulús* in the province of Yakútsk for merely walking two hundred yards into the woods to pick berries. Everywhere there were irregularities, inconsistencies, and misunderstandings which brought the administrative exiles almost daily into collision with the local authorities.

This state of things continued until the year 1882, when the present Tsar approved a code of rules for the government of all persons living at home or in exile under police surveillance.[1] I purpose to review briefly this Code, and then to illustrate, by means of selected cases, its bearing upon the life of administrative exiles in Siberia. The Code comprises forty sections and fills five closely printed octavo pages; and it is a somewhat singular fact that, although its provisions relate almost wholly to persons who have been administratively banished, they do not contain anywhere the word "exile," nor the word "banishment," nor the word "Siberia." The author of the Code seems to have been ashamed to let it clearly and definitely appear that these

[1] *Polozhénie o Politséskom Nadzóre* [Rules Relating to Police Surveillance]. Approved by the Tsar, March 12, 1882.

are regulations for the government of men and women who have been torn from their homes and banished without trial to the remotest parts of Siberia. The only suggestion of exile in the whole document is contained in the words:

> Police surveillance, over *persons assigned to definite places of residence,* takes effect by virtue of such assignment, and for the period of residence fixed. [Sect. 2.]

There is nothing whatever in these colorless words to indicate that the "definite places of residence" to which the offending "persons" have been "assigned" may be situated within the arctic circle, 5000 miles east of St. Petersburg; and I am confident that an uninstructed reader might commit the whole Code to memory without even suspecting that it relates to men and women who have been banished without trial to the wild frontiers of Mongolia, or to Yakút *ulúses* near the Asiatic pole of cold. The author of the Rules has made police surveillance the most prominent feature of his legislation, and has artfully hidden behind it, in the background, what he euphemistically calls "assigned to definite places of residence."

It might have startled the moral sense even of the Russian community if he had entitled his Code, as he ought to have entitled it, "Rules to govern the behavior of men and women exiled without trial to Siberia by the Minister of the Interior." The plain, blunt words, "exile without trial to Siberia," sound badly; but there is nothing to shock the most sensitive mind in the periphrastic statement that "Persons prejudicial to public tranquillity may be assigned by administrative process to definite places of residence."

When one is told that a Russian citizen, not accused of any crime, may be arrested by the police, may be sent, by virtue of a mere executive order, to a peasant village in Siberia, and may be forced to reside there for a term of years, one naturally asks, "What are the conditions of the life that such a person is compelled to live? What pro-

vision does the law make for his support? What is he allowed to do? What is he forbidden to do? and How in general is he treated?" To each of these questions the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance" furnish an answer; and as the official replies to such questions naturally carry more weight than the replies that might be made by the banished persons themselves, I will briefly summarize the Code, which administrative exiles sometimes humorously call their "Constitution," or "Bill of Rights." It is as follows:

The maximum limit of banishment with police surveillance shall henceforth be five years. [Sect. 3.]

As soon as an exile reaches his destination he shall be deprived of his passport, and shall be furnished with another document setting forth his name, rank, and previous residence, and giving notice to all concerned that he is authorized to live in the village of X——. [Sect. 5.]

He shall not leave the place to which he has been banished without permission from the proper authorities; and if he move from one house to another, he shall notify the police within twenty-four hours. [Sect. 7.]

He may be allowed to absent himself temporarily, in a case of particularly urgent importance, if his behavior has been such as to meet the approval of the police; but in every such case he shall obtain the permission of the governor before going outside the limits of the district, and the permission of the Minister of the Interior before going outside the limits of the province. [Sect. 8.]

An administrative exile to whom such permission has been granted must be provided with a pass and a detailed description of the route to be followed; he shall not stop on the way unless sick or unable to proceed, in which case he must give notice at once to the nearest authorities; he shall report to the police in every town or village through which he passes; and he may be sent back to his place of banishment at any time and from any point in his journey, without regard to his permit, if his behavior shall seem to be suspicious. [Sects. 9–16.]

Administrative exiles shall always report in person to the police at the first summons. [Sect. 17.]

The local police authorities shall have the right to enter the house or room of an administrative exile at any hour of the day

or night, and they shall also have the right to search such house or room and to take away any of its contents. [Sect. 19.]

Administrative exiles shall not hold any position in the service of the state or of society, and shall not do any writing for any state, municipal, or other institution, without special permission from the Minister of the Interior. [Sect. 21.]

Administrative exiles shall not be the founders, the presiding officers, nor the members of any private society or company; and they shall not act as guardians, or as curators, without permission from the Minister of the Interior. [Sects. 22, 23.]

Administrative exiles are forbidden to engage in any kind of pedagogic work; they are forbidden to give instruction in the arts or trades to scholars or apprentices; they are forbidden to deliver lectures or public addresses; they are forbidden to take part in public meetings of scientific societies; they are forbidden to participate in theatrical performances or scenic representations; and they are forbidden, generally, to exercise any public activity. They are also forbidden to have anything to do, in the capacity either of proprietor, overseer, clerk, or laborer, with any photograph gallery, lithographic establishment, printing-office, or library; they are forbidden to deal in books or other productions of the press; they are forbidden to keep tea-houses or grog-shops; and they are forbidden to trade in any way in intoxicating liquor. [Sect. 24.]

Administrative exiles shall not be received into state, municipal, or private schools, or educational institutions, without special permission from the Minister of the Interior, approved by the educational authorities. [Sect. 25.]

Administrative exiles shall not appear and plead in the courts except in behalf of themselves, their parents, their wives, or their children. They shall not act as physicians, accoucheurs, apothecaries, or chemists, without permission from the Minister of the Interior. [Sects. 26, 27.]

All lawful occupations, not above mentioned, shall, as a rule, be open to administrative exiles; but the governor of the province may nevertheless, in his discretion, forbid an exile to engage in any business that may, by virtue of local conditions, enable such exile to attain illegal ends, or render him a menace to public peace and order. [Sect. 28.]

The Minister of the Interior shall have the right to withhold from administrative exiles all letters and telegrams, and to subject

their whole correspondence—including both letters written and letters received—to police supervision. [Sect. 29.]

Failure to submit to any of the rules set forth in Sections 11–29 shall be punished with imprisonment for a period of not less than three days nor more than one month. Administrative exiles who leave their places of banishment without permission may also be tried and punished under Section 63 of the Code providing for offenses within the jurisdiction of justices of the peace. [Sect. 32.]

Administrative exiles who have no pecuniary means of their own shall receive an allowance from the Government treasury for their support, and for the support of their families, if the latter voluntarily go with them to their places of banishment. This allowance, however, shall not be made to exiles who fail to obtain employment through bad conduct or habitual laziness. [Sects. 33–37.]

Administrative exiles and their families shall be treated in the local hospitals, when sick, at the expense of the Government. [Sect. 38.]

Administrative exiles who may not have means to defray the expense of return to their homes at the expiration of their terms of banishment shall receive aid from the Government, in accordance with the imperial order of January 10, 1881, unless special directions with regard to the return of such persons shall have been given by the Minister of the Interior. [Sect. 40.]

Such, in brief, is the administrative exiles' "Constitution." I have everywhere substituted the words "administrative exiles," "banishment," and "places of banishment," for the ambiguous or misleading expressions, "persons under police surveillance," "assignment to definite places of residence," and "places of domiciliation," which are used in the text; but in so doing I have merely given clearer expression to the real meaning of the Code. Men and women banished by administrative process are not known to Russian law as "exiles." They are *pod-nadzórni*, or "persons under surveillance," and their banishment is called by a euphemistic legal fiction *vodvorénia*, or "domiciliation" in "definite places of residence." It must, of course, mitigate the grief of a bereaved mother to learn from a perusal of this law that her only son has not been "exiled," but merely "domiciled" in

an "assigned place of residence" near the spot where Captain De Long and the sailors of the *Jeannette* perished from cold and hunger.

When an administrative exile, after weeks or months of travel "by *étape*," reaches at last the Siberian town or village to which he has been "assigned," and in which he is to be "domiciled," he is conducted to the police-station, is furnished with an identifying document called a *vid na zhítelstvo*, or "permit to reside," and receives, from the *isprávnik* or the *zasedátel*, a printed copy of the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance." He is informed at the same time that he cannot go outside the limits of the village without permission; that his correspondence is "under control," and that, as a precaution against escape, he will be required to report personally at stated intervals to the chief of police, or will be visited as often as may be necessary by an officer detailed to watch him. His first need, of course, is shelter; and taking his exile passport and his copy of the "Rules" in his hand he goes in search of a "domicile." The fact that he is a political exile is not stated in his "permit to reside," but everybody knows it,—he has been seen to arrive in the village under guard,—and householders are naturally unwilling or reluctant to give him lodgings. A political exile is presumably a dangerous man, and, moreover, a man who is liable to be visited at all hours of the day and night by the police. A peasant villager does not care to have his house invaded every day, and perhaps half a dozen times a day, by a suspicious police officer; and besides that, he (the householder) may be required to watch the movements of his dangerous lodger, and at inconvenient times may be summoned to the police-station to answer questions. In view of these unpleasant possibilities, he thinks it safest not to have anything to do with a person about whom nothing is known except that he is a state criminal under police surveillance. As the tired political goes from house to house, seeking lodgings, and as he finds himself regarded

everywhere with fear or suspicion, he understands and appreciates the feeling that impels a common criminal colonist to call an exile's "permit to reside" a "wolf's passport."

At last, with the aid perhaps of other political exiles, he finds and rents a single scantily furnished room in the house of some poor peasant, unpacks his portmanteau, and proceeds to make the acquaintance of his environment. The first and most important question that arises in his mind is the question of subsistence. How is he to live? He has left his wife and young children entirely unprovided for in European Russia; he has long been tortured by a vivid consciousness of their helpless and destitute condition, and now he finds himself suddenly confronted with the question of maintenance for himself. What is he to do? He examines the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," and learns from Section 33 that "administrative exiles who have no pecuniary means of their own shall receive an allowance from the Government treasury for their support." This "allowance," as he soon ascertains, is six *rúbles*, or a little less than three dollars, a month. He makes inquiries in the town or village market-place, and finds, as the result of his investigations, that if he receives the Government allowance, and buys only the things that he regards as absolutely essential to life, his monthly budget will stand as follows:[1]

RECEIPTS.		EXPENDITURES.	
Government allowance	$3.00	Rent of a single room	$1.00
Deficit	1.72	40 lbs. of meat	1.50
		40 lbs. of wheat flour	.58
		40 lbs. of rye flour	.33
		10 eggs	.12
		A "brick" of tea — cheapest	.79
		1 lb. of sugar	.10
		1 lb. of tobacco, cheapest sort	.25
		1 lb. kerosene	.05
	$4.72		$4.72

[1] This is a real, not an imaginary exile balance-sheet, and the prices are those that prevailed in the town of Surgút, province of Tobólsk, Western Siberia, in the spring of 1888.

From this balance-sheet it appears that although an administrative exile in the province of Tobólsk limits himself to the barest essentials of life, spends nothing for service, for washing, for fuel, or for medicines, and uses only five cents' worth of kerosene and ten cents' worth of sugar in a month, he exceeds by $1.72 his monthly allowance. It is evident, therefore, that the question of personal maintenance is not to be solved in this way. The thoughts of the exile then turn naturally to employment. He cannot expect, of course, to find in a remote Siberian village as many opportunities for the exercise of trained intellectual ability as he might find in St. Petersburg or Moscow; but he does not insist upon profitable employment, or even upon employment that shall be pleasant and congenial; he is ready to undertake work of any kind that will enable him to keep soul and body together. He has had a university training; he knows three or four languages; he is, perhaps, a skilful physician and surgeon like Dr. Biéli in Verkhoyánsk, a photographer like Mr. Karélin in Ust Kámenogórsk, or a journalist like Mr. Belokónski in Minusínsk; he is an expert penman, a good accountant, a competent teacher, and a fair musician. It seems to him that he can hardly fail, even in Siberia, to earn fifty cents a day; and fifteen dollars a month would enable him to live in comparative decency and comfort. However, upon again consulting the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," he finds that he is strictly forbidden, under pain of imprisonment, to act in the capacity of teacher, doctor, chemist, photographer, lithographer, librarian, copyist, editor, compositor, contributor, reporter, lecturer, actor, lawyer, bookseller, or clerk. He cannot hold any position in the service of the state or of society; he cannot be an officer or a partner in any commercial company; he cannot be a member of any scientific body; he cannot have anything to do with drugs, medicines, photographic or lithographic materials, books, weapons, or newspapers; and, finally, he cannot "exercise any public

activity." What is there left for an educated man to do? All the pursuits for which his life and previous training have qualified him are absolutely closed to him. He has not the manual skill necessary to fit him for the work of a carpenter, a shoemaker, a wheelwright, or a blacksmith; he cannot turn merchant or trader, for lack of the requisite capital; and he cannot become a driver or a teamster, on account of his inability to leave the village to which he has been assigned. The only occupation, therefore, that seems to be open to him is the cultivation of the soil. The "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance" do not forbid him to raise potatoes, turnips, and cabbages,—there is no danger that he will infect the soil with his "seditious" ideas,—and in agricultural labor he determines to seek a solution of the hard problem of life. He soon learns, however, that all of the arable land in the neighborhood of the village belongs to the village commune, and has already been allotted to its members. He cannot find a single acre of unappropriated soil without going four or five *versts* away, and if he steps outside the narrow limits of the settlement he renders himself liable to arrest and imprisonment. In this disheartening situation—banished to Siberia and tied hand and foot by the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance—he can do absolutely nothing except make an appeal to the governor, the governor-general, or the Minister of the Interior, and beg, as a favor, for a recognition of his right to labor for his daily bread.

In 1883 the political exiles in the town of Akmolínsk applied to General Kolpakófski, the governor-general of the steppe territories, for permission to give music lessons. They found it almost impossible, they said, either to live on the Government allowance, or to support themselves by any of the means that the "Rules" left open to them. They could, however, teach music, and they begged to be allowed to do so. This seemed—or would seem to an American—a very modest, natural, and reasonable request. There is

nothing "dangerous" or "prejudicial to public order" in a piano, and it was hardly to be supposed that Siberian children would become nihilists as a result of learning five-finger exercises. Governor-general Kolpakófski, however, either thought that the petitioners would undermine the loyalty of the children of Akmolínsk by teaching them revolutionary songs, or believed that destitution and misery are the natural and proper concomitants of administrative exile. He therefore replied to the letter by saying that teaching was an occupation forbidden by the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," and that if the administrative exiles in Akmolínsk needed work, in order to obtain the necessaries of life, they might "hire themselves out to the Kírghis, who pay from five to seven cents a day for laborers." This was almost as cruel and insulting as it would be to tell post-graduate students of the Johns Hopkins University, who had been banished without trial to the mountains of the Sierra Nevada, that if they needed employment they might catch grasshoppers for the Digger Indians.

About the same time, the political exiles in Ust Kámenogórsk asked General Kolpakófski for permission to occupy and cultivate a tract of Government land near their place of banishment. They offered to improve the land, to pay rent for it as soon as it should become productive, and to leave all their improvements to the state, without reimbursement, at the expiration of their term of exile. This, again, was a reasonable proposition, and, moreover, a proposition advantageous in every way to the state. The governor-general, however, made to it the same reply that he had made to the petition of the administrative exiles in Akmolínsk, viz., that if they needed work they might hire themselves out as day-laborers to the Cossacks.[1]

[1] These illustrations of official harshness and indifference were given to me in writing by a political exile in the province of Semipalátinsk whose statements I have every reason to trust. I did not meet General Kólpakofski while in Omsk, and I have no personal knowledge of his character; but I did

The "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance" are not enforced with uniform strictness at all times, nor in all parts of Siberia, and the extent to which they debar exiles from employment is largely dependent upon the character of the officials who are intrusted with their enforcement. General Tseklínski, the late governor of the territory of Semipalátinsk, treated the exiles in his jurisdiction with humanity and consideration; not because he was in sympathy with their views, but simply because he was a gentleman and a humane and considerate officer. The same statement may justly be made, I think, with regard to Mr. Nathaniel Petukhóf, who at the time of my visit was acting-governor of the province of Tomsk. In the province of Tobólsk, on the other hand, the administrative exiles have always been treated with harshness, and at times with brutal severity. In April, 1888, the political exiles in the town of Surgút,[1] to the number of nineteen men, addressed a respectful letter to the Minister of the Interior, protesting against the treatment to which they were subjected, declaring that their situation had become insupportable, and solemnly giving notice that, whatever might be the consequences, they would no longer submit. A copy of this protest has been sent to me from Siberia, and lies before me as I write. It is too long to be quoted here, but a translation of it will be found in Appendix C. How desperate the situation of these exiles must have been appears from the fact that some of them had almost finished their terms of banishment, and had only to suffer a little longer without complaint in order to be free; but

meet there the governor of the territory of Akmolínsk, and he impressed me as a man who would be quite capable of preparing for the governor-general's signature just such a letter as that which was sent to the Akmolínsk exiles in response to their petition for leave to teach music. In some parts of Eastern Siberia official acts even more extraordinary and incredible than these came under my direct personal observation.

[1] Surgút is a small town of 1300 inhabitants, situated on the right bank of the river Ob, in the province of Tobólsk about five degrees south of the arctic circle. It is 575 miles northeast of the city of Tobólsk, and 2500 miles from St. Petersburg.

they could suffer *no* longer. There is a limit to human endurance, and that limit the Surgút exiles had reached. All that I know of their fate, and of the result of their protest, I learn from a brief paragraph in the *Siberian Gazette*, which announces that "nineteen audaciously impudent political exiles" in the town of Surgút "have been removed"; and that the *isprávnik* of Surgút and the chief of police of Tobólsk have been officially "thanked" by the provincial governor, Mr. Troínítski, for the distinguished services rendered by them on the occasion of this "removal." To what lonely and far-away corner of Siberia these nineteen unfortunate politicals have been sent for their "audaciously impudent" attempt to touch the heart and awaken the sympathies of Count Dmítri Tolstói, the Minister of the Interior, I do not know. There are only a few "places of domiciliation" worse than Surgút. One of them is Berózof, near the mouth of the river Ob, 2700 miles from St. Petersburg; another is Turukhánsk, a "town" of 32 houses and 181 inhabitants situated near the arctic circle, 4100 miles from St. Petersburg; and the third is the dreaded province of Yákútsk.[1]

The administrative exile who, upon reaching his place of banishment, finds himself within the jurisdiction of a governor like Mr. Troinítski is probably forced by imperious necessity to petition the Minister of the Interior for relief. He is without pecuniary means of his own; he cannot live on the allowance of three dollars a month made to him by the state; and the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance" are enforced by the governor with such pitiless severity that a man who is subject to them cannot possibly earn his daily bread and at the same time keep out of jail. Under such circumstances the banished political offender, who perhaps is a physician, writes to the Minister of the Interior a

[1] To these places are sent political offenders who, after their banishment to Siberia, manifest an insubordinate disposition, or, in other words, address "audaciously impudent" complaints of ill-treatment to the Minister of the Interior.

statement of the facts, informs his Excellency that there is no physician in the town or village to which he (the exile) has been assigned, and asks if he cannot be allowed to resume the practice of his profession. This, apparently, is even more than a reasonable request. The petitioner is a trained and skilful physician. He is living perhaps in a district containing twenty thousand inhabitants, scattered over hundreds of square miles, and urgently in need of medical advice and help.[1] To an American it would seem as if the request of an exiled physician to be allowed to practise in such a country as this must not only be granted, but be welcomed with gratitude. Does the Minister of the Interior so treat it?

In 1883 the Medical Society of the city of Tver[2] sent a memorial to the Minister of the Interior setting forth the facts with regard to the lack of medical assistance and the urgent need of trained medical officers in Siberia, calling his Excellency's attention to the large number of physicians and medical students living in that part of the empire under sentence of banishment, and asking whether the Government would not consider favorably a suggestion that such physicians and medical students be exempted from the disabilities imposed by Section 27 of the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," and be allowed to practise in the provinces to which they had been banished. Nothing cer-

[1] In a report made by the governor-general of Eastern Siberia to the Tsar in 1881, a copy of which is in my possession, it is stated that "the number of physicians in the country is utterly insufficient. I shall not depart from the truth if I say that in the cities only is there any possibility of taking medical measures for the preservation of the health of the people. In every other part of Eastern Siberia physicians are almost wholly lacking, and the local population is left helpless in its struggle with diphtheria and other contagious diseases which desolate the country. The adoption of measures to prevent the spread of disease among cattle is out of the question. Immense numbers of cattle die every year from plague, causing the people incalculable loss." (Second report of Governor-general Anúchin to the Tsar; section entitled "The Construction and Medical Departments.")

[2] Tver is a city of European Russia, situated on the Nikoláievsk railroad a short distance from Moscow. It is the capital of the province of the same name.

tainly could have been more wise and humane; nothing could have been more worthy of respectful consideration than such a suggestion from such a source. With what reception did it meet? I am sorry to say that it met with swift punishment. For sending this memorial to the Minister of the Interior—for venturing to intercede in behalf of physicians banished upon suspicion of political "untrustworthiness"—the Medical Society of Tver was closed and forbidden to hold further meetings, and two of its members who happened to be in the service of the state as surgeons in the Tver hospital were summarily dismissed from their places.[1]

If persons who merely suggest that exiled physicians be allowed to practise are punished in this way by the Minister of the Interior, one can imagine how exiled physicians themselves who practise without permission are punished by that minister's subordinates.

In the year 1880 there was living in the city of Kharkóf a young medical student named Nifónt Dólgopólof. He had finished his course of instruction in the medical faculty of the Kharkóf University, and was about to take his final examination, when there occurred one of the scenes of tumult and disorder that are so common in Russian universities, when a large number of students, excited by some real or fancied grievance, undertake to hold an indignation meeting in the street opposite the university buildings. In Kharkóf, on the occasion to which I refer, the disturbance became so serious that the university authorities were unable to deal with it, and a troop of mounted Cossacks was sent to break up the meeting and to disperse the mob of excited undergraduates. Irritated by the resistance that they encountered, and determined to clear the street at all hazards, the Cossacks rode through the crowd of hooting students, striking right and left at random with the short,

[1] My authorities for the facts of this case are four or five citizens of Tver, including two members of the Tver Medical Society.

hinged riding-whips known in Russia as *nagáikas*.[1] Mr. Dólgopólof, who was not a revolutionist, nor even an "untrustworthy" person, had nothing to do with the disorder; but he happened to be present in the street as a spectator, and when the Cossacks began using their whips he turned to a *chinóvnik*—an officer of the civil service—who stood near him, and exclaimed indignantly, "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves! It is cowardly and disgraceful to strike men with whips!" The *chinóvnik* called the attention of the police to Mr. Dólgopólof, and caused him to be arrested and thrown into prison as a person who was aiding and abetting the disorder. Some months later the young medical student, without even the pretense of a trial, was exiled by administrative process to the town of Kurgán, in Western Siberia. In March, 1881, he was required to take the oath of allegiance to the new Tsar, Alexander III., and as a punishment for refusing to do so was sent to the town of Tiukalínsk. At that time the *isprávnik* of Tiukalínsk was a hot-tempered, unscrupulous, and brutal man named Ílyin; and with this official the young medical student soon came into collision. The first skirmish grew out of Dr. Dólgopólof's failure to obey strictly the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance." He was a man of generous and

[1] There was nothing extraordinary in this method of breaking up a street meeting of indignant students. It was common enough at that time, and it has often been resorted to since. Precisely in this way began, on the 26th of November, 1887, the notorious revolt of the students in Moscow, which led eventually to the closing of all the great universities in the empire. A peaceful meeting of students on the Strástnoi Boulevard had been broken up by a *sótnia* of Cossacks with whips, under circumstances that made the outrage absolutely intolerable. The sufferers sent a circular letter of complaint and protest to their fellow-students in St. Petersburg, Kazán, Kiev, Kharkóf, and Odessa; the excitement extended, with growing intensity, from university to university; and the agitation finally culminated in the "going out" of 10,000 students and the arrest, rustication, or exile of more than 1000. The Russian Government attributes the spread of "nihilism" in the empire to the efforts of a few desperate fanatics and assassins who seek to overthrow all existing institutions. It is, perhaps, pertinent to inquire whether the horse-whipping of university students in the streets may not have some remote bearing upon the distressing phenomenon, and whether it may not explain to some extent the lamentable state of affairs that forces a naturally benevolent government to send its erring subjects to Siberia without trial.

sympathetic disposition, as well as a skilful surgeon, and he found it extremely difficult at times to avoid acting in a professional capacity. He never sought practice, nor made it a means of support; but when a peasant in the incipient stage of typhus fever asked him for advice, or a man suffering from cataract came to him for relief, he gave the requisite advice, or performed the necessary operation, without pay, simply because he regarded the rendering of such service as a duty imposed upon him by humanity. The fame of Dr. Dólgopólof's cures soon reached the *isprávnik*, and that official, summoning the young surgeon to the police-station, called his attention in an offensive manner to Section 27 of the "Rules," and forbade him thereafter, upon pain of arrest and imprisonment, to treat sick peasants under any circumstances, with pay or without pay. Dr. Dólgopólof, after some hot words, submitted, and discontinued entirely his irregular and unauthorized practice; but his relations with the *isprávnik* at once became hostile. At that time the mayor of Tiukalínsk was a prominent and wealthy merchant named Balákhin. In the autumn of 1883 Mr. Balákhin's son, while handling a revolver, accidentally shot his mother in the leg. The wound was a dangerous one, and the extraction of the ball would necessitate a difficult surgical operation. The only regular physician in the place, a nervous and rather timid man named Hull, was called in, and succeeded in stopping the hemorrhage from the cut artery; but he declined to undertake the operation for the removal of the ball, and advised Mr. Balákhin to send for Dr. Dólgopólof. "He is a skilful surgeon," said the local practitioner, "and I am not. He can do what is necessary far better than I can, and I don't like to undertake so serious an operation." Mr. Balákhin thereupon hastened to Dr. Dólgopólof and asked his aid.

"I am not allowed to practise," said the young surgeon.

"But this may be a case of life or death," urged Mr. Balákhin.

"I can't help it," replied Dr. Dólgopólof; "my relations with the *isprávnik* are strained. I have already been once in trouble for practising without authority; and I have been strictly forbidden to act professionally, under any circumstances whatever, upon pain of imprisonment."

"You were exiled to Siberia," said Mr. Balákhin, desperately, "for your humanity—because you showed sympathy with people in distress. Have you not courage and humanity enough now to come to the help of a suffering woman, even though you may be imprisoned for it?"

"If you put the question in that way," replied Dr. Dólgopólof, "I have. I will perform the operation and take the punishment."

Upon making an examination, Dr. Dólgopólof found that Mrs. Balákhina was not in immediate danger, and he thereupon suggested that a telegram be sent to Governor Lisogórski, at Tobólsk, asking that Dr. Dólgopólof be authorized to perform a grave surgical operation which the local practitioner declined to undertake. The telegram was sent, and in an hour an answer came, saying that the case was not one over which the governor had jurisdiction, and directing the mayor to apply for the desired permission to the medical department of the Ministry of the Interior.

"You see," said Dr. Dólgopólof, contemptuously, to Mr. Balákhin, "how much regard your rulers have for human life."

He then performed the operation, extracted the ball, tied up the artery, and left Mrs. Balákhina comfortable and out of danger. On the following day the *isprávnik*, Ílyin, caused the young surgeon to be arrested and thrown into prison, and began proceedings in a case which still stands on record in the archives of the province of Tobólsk as "The affair of the unauthorized extraction of a bullet, by the administrative exile Nifónt Dólgopólof, from the leg of Madam Balákhina, wife of the mayor of Tiukalínsk." While these proceedings dragged along in the Circumlocution Office of the

provincial administration at Tobólsk, Dr. Dólgopólof lay in the foul district prison at Tiukalínsk, where he finally contracted typhus fever.[1]

Of course the case of Dr. Dólgopólof excited intense feeling in the little provincial town, and when he was taken sick, people came to the prison every day to inquire about him and to bring him food or flowers. These manifestations of public sympathy were not without their effect even upon the *isprávnik*, and, in view of them, that official finally ordered that the young surgeon be released and taken to his home. At the same time, however, he wrote officially to Governor Lisogórski that the administrative exile Nifónt Dólgopólof, while awaiting trial upon a criminal charge, was exerting a very dangerous and pernicious influence in the town; that people were showing him sympathy by bringing him food and flowers; and that this sympathy would very likely go even to the extent of furnishing him with means of escape. Under such circumstances he (the *isprávnik*) felt burdened with a responsibility that he thought should not be laid upon him, and he begged leave to suggest to his Excellency that the prisoner be removed forthwith to the town of Surgút or to some other part of the province where he would not be known, and where he might be more securely guarded. There was not an intimation in the letter that Dr. Dólgopólof was lying dangerously ill from typhus fever; and Governor Lisogórski, ignorant of this important fact, telegraphed the *isprávnik* to send the prisoner at once "by *étape*" to the town of Surgút. The *isprávnik* summoned the *nachálnik* of the local convoy command, acquainted him with the governor's orders, and directed him to carry them into effect. The convoy officer, however, declined to do so, upon the ground that he was strictly forbidden to receive from the local authorities prisoners who were sick; that Dr. Dólgopólof was in a dan-

[1] The sanitary condition of the Tiukalínsk prison in 1884 was such that thirty per cent. of its inmates were treated in the prison hospital. (Report of the Prison Administration for 1885.)

gerous condition; that he would very likely die on the road; and that he himself (the convoy officer) might then be held to serious accountability for violation of law in taking charge of him. The *isprávnik*, determined not to be thwarted in his attempt to get rid of a man whom he hated, obtained a peasant's cart, detailed two or three of his own police officers to act as a convoy, and went with them to the young surgeon's house. Dr. Dólgopólof was lying in bed, and was so weak that he could not stand. His wife resisted forcibly the attempt to remove him, whereupon she was tied hand and foot, and her husband, clothed only in a night-shirt, was carried out in a sheet and put into the cart. This transaction occurred on the 24th of October, 1883. The weather was cold and raw, and Dr. Dólgopólof would almost certainly have perished from exposure had not a sympathetic bystander taken off and thrown over him his own fur "shuba," or overcoat. In this condition the sick prisoner was carried to the circuit town of Ishím, a distance of 126 miles. In Ishím there were at that time eleven political exiles, including the well-known Russian novelist Máchtet. Many of them knew Dr. Dólgopólof personally, all of them knew his history, and as soon as they discovered his condition they went to the Ishím *isprávnik* and declared that they would resist to the uttermost, with force, any attempt to carry the young surgeon on. They had him examined by the local medical officer; they induced the *isprávnik* to draw up a "protocol," or statement of the circumstances of the case; and they telegraphed Governor Lisogórski at Tobólsk, asking whether he had authorized the *isprávnik* of Tiukalínsk to send a dying man out on the road, at that season of the year, with no other covering than a night-shirt. As soon as the governor learned that Dr. Dólgopólof was sick he telegraphed the *isprávnik* at Ishím to have the young surgeon taken to the hospital and properly cared for, and suspended the order for his removal to Surgút. It was currently reported in Ishím that his Excel-

lency also availed himself of this favorable opportunity to "squeeze" five hundred *rúbles* out of the *isprávnik* of Tiukalínsk as the price of immunity from prosecution on the charge of violating law by sending an exile out on the road while dangerously sick. The report may or may not have been well founded, but it was a notorious fact that the governor sold to the highest bidder most of the provincial offices at his disposal, and that he received payment in money intentionally lost to him at cards by the office-seekers.[1]

Dr. Dólgopólof remained in the Ishím hospital until he recovered his health, and was then sent forward to his destination. He was eventually transferred to the province of Semipalátinsk, where his condition was greatly improved, and where, when I last heard of him, he was engaged in making craniological measurements and anthropological researches among the Kírghis.[2]

I have, perhaps, devoted a disproportionate amount of space to this "affair of the unauthorized extraction of a bullet, by the administrative exile Nifónt Dólgopólof, from the leg of Madame Balákhina, wife of the mayor of Tiukalínsk"; but it is a typical case, and not only illustrates the inherent defects of the Russian method of dealing with "untrustworthy" citizens, but shows clearly the specific nature of the grievances against which the Surgút exiles protested in their letter to the Minister of the Interior in April, 1888. In that case one of the politicals, the late Mr.

[1] There were *isprávniks* in Siberia, at the time of my visit, against whom were pending as many as ten criminal charges. They had contrived, however, by means best known to themselves and their superiors, to stave off trial year after year, and I have no doubt that they are still holding their places.

[2] A fairly accurate account of the treatment of Dr. Dólgopólof by the *isprávnik* of Tiukalínsk was published in the *Siberian Gazette* at Tomsk, and the substance of it was reprinted in the London *Times* of January 11, 1884 (weekly edition), under the head of "Russia." The Russian censor, however, would not allow the *Siberian Gazette* to say that the victim of this brutality was a *political* exile, and consequently the London *Times* was unaware of the fact. The circumstances that led to the final collision between the *isprávnik* and the young surgeon are now published for the first time.

Leo Ivanof, had been virtually murdered by official cruelty and indifference, and two others had been reduced to such a physical condition that, to use their own word, they regarded themselves as "doomed." As these two sick men have since been "removed" to Berózof, Turukhánsk, or some worse place, they are, perhaps, by this time dead and out of their misery.

When an administrative exile has succeeded in solving the problem of personal maintenance, and when he is relieved from anxiety with regard to the necessaries of life, such as food, shelter, and clothing, he begins to feel the humiliating restraints of police surveillance and "controlled" correspondence. The officers whose duty it is to watch him are often men of degraded character and criminal antecedents. Many of the *zasedátels*, or chiefs of police in the *vólosts*, or districts, and a still greater number of *písars*, or district police secretaries, are common malefactors, sent to Siberia for felony, and taken into the Government service under assumed names at the expiration of their terms of forced colonization. The initials and places of residence of at least a score of these felons in police uniform have been published in the liberal Siberian newspapers. To men of this character are intrusted, in many parts of Siberia, the health, the honor, and the lives of refined and highly educated political exiles of both sexes, and it is not a matter for surprise if the latter are sometimes outrageously insulted and brutally treated. I personally know police officers in Siberia—and I now particularly remember two, one of them the chief of police in Minusínsk—whom I should hesitate to meet anywhere at night unless I had a revolver. Even in a comparatively well-governed city like Tomsk, the history of the police has been a history stained with acts of violence, outrage, and crime, including the arrest and imprisonment of innocent citizens by the hundred, the taking of bribes from notorious criminals, the subornation of perjury, the use of torture, and the beating nearly to death of pregnant

women. According to the *Tomsk Provincial Gazette*, an official journal, one of the recently appointed governors of that province received, on the occasion of his very first visit of inspection to the city prisons, no less than three hundred complaints of unjust imprisonment. Upon investigation, two hundred of them were shown to be well founded, and the complainants were set at liberty.[1] So boundless is the power of *isprávniks* and chiefs of police in the smaller Siberian towns and villages, that among the peasants the expression once became proverbial, "In heaven, God; in Okhótsk, Koch." How many Kochs there are among the *isprávniks* and *zasedátels* in the remoter parts of Siberia only God, the peasants, and the political exiles know. The nature of the surveillance maintained by such officers as these over the banished politicals varies in different parts of Siberia; but to what extent the supervision *may* go is shown by an extract from the letter of an administrative exile published in the *Juridical Messenger*, the organ of the Moscow Bar Association. It is as follows:

> The surveillance maintained over us is of the most unceremonious character. The police officers strive to earn distinction by surpassing one another in assiduous watchfulness. They enter our quarters repeatedly every day to see that we are at home, and that no one else is there, and they go through all our rooms. They walk past our houses constantly, looking in at the windows and listening at the doors. They post sentries at night on the corners of the streets where we reside, and they compel our landlords and our neighbors to watch our movements and report upon them to the local authorities.[2]

A young lady who was in exile at Tunká, a small East-Siberian village on the frontier of Mongolia, told me that it was not an unusual thing to come back to her apartments after a short walk, or a call upon some other exile, and find

[1] "Police Law in Siberia," *Eastern Review* (St. Petersburg, Oct. 13, 1883), No. 41, p. 1.

[2] Review of the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," in magazine *Juridical Messenger*, Vol. XIV, No. 12, p. 561. Moscow, December, 1882.

a police officer in cap and boots asleep on her bed. Fear of insult or outrage has forced most of the banished women in Siberia to live in the same houses with the exiled men. Madame Dicheskúla lived in one half of the house occupied by Mr. Lobonófski in Semipalátinsk; Madame Breshkófskaya occupied a room adjoining that of Mr. Shamárin in Selengínsk; and I found the same state of affairs existing in a dozen other parts of Siberia. In fact, it is inevitable. Among the political exiles are defenseless girls from sixteen to twenty years of age, and young married women whose husbands are in other parts of Siberia or in penal servitude at the mines. They cannot live entirely alone under a system of surveillance which authorizes a runaway convict, in the uniform of a police officer, to enter their apartments at any hour of the day or night.

Another feature of administrative exile life, which exasperates and embitters the politicals almost as much as surveillance, is the supervision of their correspondence. An exile whose correspondence is "under control" cannot send a letter to his wife without previously submitting it to the *isprávnik* for supervision and approval. The *isprávnik* may, in his discretion, forward it to its destination, destroy it, or send it to the Minister of the Interior. Letters for an exile received at the local post-office are turned over to the same official, who opens and reads them, crosses out anything that may seem to him objectionable, and delivers them, after such mutilation, at his leisure. If he wishes to torture or punish an exile who is personally obnoxious to him, or who has been "audaciously impudent," he may withhold such exile's letters altogether, and deprive him for months of all news from the wife and children whom he has been forced to leave uncared for in European Russia. The *isprávnik* of Tára, in the province of Tobólsk, used to take the letters of exiles to the local official club, read them aloud to his friends, and ask advice with regard to the erasure or "blacking out" of particular passages. More than one political in Tára heard

of his letters for the first time on the street from some person to whom the *isprávnik* had shown them. The reader can perhaps imagine, without any assistance from me, the feelings of a political exile who knows that the sacred words of love and tenderness written to him with agony and tears by the unhappy wife who is dearer to him than his own soul have been read aloud by the *isprávnik* between drinks of *vódka* to a circle of boon companions at the club. Even when an exile, by a fortunate accident, has heard of a letter addressed to him, he may not be able to get it. The *isprávnik*, after reading it to his friends, may conclude that it contains a hidden cipher, and that delivery of it is inexpedient. I have seen exile letters that had been scorched with heat and treated with chemicals by suspicious officials who believed, or pretended to believe, that there was invisible writing in sympathetic ink between the lines. Such letters are frequently held by the *isprávnik* or the chief of police for months, and then, scorched or blistered by experimental tests, and with all of the suspiciously vague or ambiguous expressions carefully crossed out, they are finally delivered. Sometimes an exile is summoned to the police station and subjected to a searching examination with regard to the contents or the meaning of a letter that he has never seen and that is still in the possession of the *isprávnik*. How maddening such treatment of private correspondence must be to a man who has never been accused of crime, who has never been tried, who has never been legally deprived of his rights as a citizen, and who is already aflame with just indignation, the reader can perhaps imagine.

Another source of exasperation to the administrative exile—and it is the last that I now have space to mention—is the anomalous position in which he is placed by virtue of banishment without trial and subjection to the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance." He is neither a citizen living under the protection of law, nor a criminal deprived of civil rights by law. He is subject to all the obli-

gations of a citizen, and he does not enjoy even the rights of a criminal. He is, in short, completely at the mercy of irresponsible power. The peculiar situation, from a legal point of view, of a man who has been exiled by administrative process is clearly shown in the following petition or memorial, sent by an administrative exile in the year 1881 to the "Governing Senate"—the Russian High Court of Appeals. Of course the petitioner did not expect by means of this document to improve his condition, or to secure any guaranty of rights. On the contrary, he was almost certain to render his situation worse by sending to the Governing Senate so "audaciously impudent" a communication. He had just been asked, however, to take the oath of allegiance to the new Tsar, Alexander III., and it relieved him, I presume, to give expression to his feelings in this half-satirical production. I do not personally know the petitioner, and it is not necessary to state how I became possessed of a copy of his petition. I can, however, vouch for the authenticity, not only of the document itself, but of the indorsement made upon it by the Governing Senate.

KURGÁN, PROVINCE OF TOBÓLSK,
WESTERN SIBERIA, March 31, 1881.

TO THE GOVERNING SENATE OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE: On the 28th day of March, 1881, I [an administrative exile] received a notification from the police authorities of the town of Kurgán to appear at the police station and take the oath of allegiance to the present reigning Emperor of Russia, Alexander Alexándrovich. This requirement seems to me to be inconsistent with the Emperor's manifesto of March 1, 1881. The reason assigned in that manifesto for requiring the oath of allegiance from the peasants of the empire was that such peasants, by virtue of the decree of emancipation, had ceased to be serfs, had become free citizens, and were therefore subject to the laws made for the government of such citizens. I have all proper respect for these words, and I regard as perfectly just, not only the reasoning itself, but the conclusions that logically flow from that reasoning. One of these conclusions is, that if Russian peasants [and other Russians] had

not been free citizens, and had not been subject to the general laws of the Empire, they would not have been required to take the oath of allegiance. The Imperial manifesto of March 1 exacts the oath of allegiance only from free citizens subject to the operation of all the laws of the State. The question now arises, "What am I; am I a free citizen?" My father was an hereditary noble of the Russian Empire, and my mother was my father's legal wife. According to Russian law I must inherit the rank of my father, and consequently the rights of a free citizen. The most important rights guaranteed by law to a free citizen are, first, the right to personal liberty [so long as he does not commit a crime], and, second, the right to protection for his family and for his property. I myself, however, am deprived of liberty; my family has been broken up; my property has been confiscated by the Third Section,[1] and I am forbidden to engage in the lawful occupations for which I have been specially fitted. I am not allowed to go a step outside the limits of the town of Kurgán; I have been transported to a distance of 3000 kilometers from my family, and I cannot send a letter even to my wife without previously submitting it to strangers for inspection. In view of these facts it is clear that I am neither a nobleman nor a free citizen.

My forcible detention in Siberia, then, raises the question, "Have I not been deprived of all civil rights and sent hither as a forced colonist?" I turn to the laws of the Empire relating to forced colonists deprived of all civil rights, and I find that their situation is precisely analogous to mine with one exception. A forced colonist may hope gradually to reacquire, by successive steps, a part of the rights that have been taken away from him. He may, in time, recover the right to go from place to place within the limits of his province, or even within the limits of Siberia.[2] I, however, can indulge no such hope. I am interned in the town of

[1] The Third Section of the Tsar's chancellery formerly included the Department of Imperial Police. That department, however, has since been put under the direct control of the Minister of the Interior.

[2] Russian law provides for an amelioration of the condition of *poseléntsi*, or forced colonists, who have, by continuous good conduct, shown a disposition to reform. After the lapse of more or less time they may obtain permission to move from place to place within certain prescribed limits, and may even attach themselves eventually to rural Siberian communes, and recover some of their lost rights of citizenship. The point made by Mr. Sidorátski is that he cannot be a criminal colonist because he is denied even the privilege, which is granted to the latter, of improving his condition and reacquiring civil rights. He is in an anomalous position not recognized or provided for by law.

Kurgán for an indefinite period. It is clear, therefore, that I am not a forced colonist, and this conclusion is confirmed by the fact that forced colonization is a punishment inflicted only by sentence of a court and for crime. What, then, am I? If I am neither a freeman, representing the highest grade of Russian citizenship, nor a criminal, representing the lowest grade, I am debarred from Russian citizenship altogether, or, in other words, I am a foreigner. Indeed I must be a foreigner — unquestionably a foreigner! The Russian State does not recognize me as a free citizen, nor does it put me on the level of a criminal whose rights as a citizen have been taken away. It has refused — and worse than refused — to protect my liberty, my family, and my property. I must, therefore, be regarded as a foreigner. But am I a free foreigner? No; I am not free. If I were a free foreigner I should have the right to leave Russia; and I trust that I could find a civilized country — perhaps more than one — that would receive and recognize me as an honest and loyal citizen. I am, however, deprived of this right; consequently, if a foreigner, I must be a prisoner of war. But to what nation do I belong, where is my fatherland, and in what war was I captured? Has peace been concluded, and if so, why have not I been returned to my countrymen with other prisoners of war? I am unable to answer these questions; but the situation of a prisoner of war is an intolerably hard one, and in that situation I have been for five years.

I most humbly beg the Russian Governing Senate to accept me as a Russian subject; *i. e.*, to declare me a free Russian citizen living under the protection of the laws. Then, having received all the rights of a citizen, I will gladly perform all a citizen's duties. If, however, the Governing Senate is not willing to accept me as a Russian subject, can it not allow me to leave the Russian Empire, in order that I may find for myself a fatherland?

It seems to me that the oath of allegiance not only imposes certain obligations, but recognizes, at the same time, certain rights. The exaction of that oath from me, therefore, is equivalent to a recognition of my free citizenship. Is not this assumption true? I await an answer. If the Governing Senate, the highest judicial tribunal in Russia, makes it clear to me that I am mistaken, or, in other words, shows me that I must perform all the duties of a Russian subject without enjoying any of a Russian subject's rights, then, as a prisoner of war, I must submit.

Vasílli Sidorátski.

(INDORSEMENT ON THE ABOVE PETITION.)

On this the 4th day of June, 1881, the Governing Senate, having heard the within petition, orders: That since such petition does not bear the highest title,[1] and is not in the form prescribed by law (Article 205, part 2, Vol. X of the Collection of Laws, edition of 1876), it shall be returned to the petitioner without consideration (in accordance with Article 225 of the same part and volume). A ukáz to carry this resolution into effect will be sent the provincial administration of Tobólsk.

CHIEF SECRETARY N. BRUD —— [remainder of name illegible in the original.]

By ASS'T CHIEF SECRETARY BARON BUKSHEVDEN.

The result of putting an innocent man into the extra-legal position described by Mr. Sidorátski, and treating him as if he had no rights that any official need respect, is to exasperate and infuriate him to the last degree. The well-known but now suppressed Russian newspaper, *Gólos*, in a review of the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," said, with force and justice, that "administrative exile is a double-edged weapon. It removes from a certain place a man who is thought to exert an injurious influence, but by depriving him of his civil rights and putting him into the position of an outlaw, it frequently rouses in him such anti-human feelings as to transform a possible criminal not only into an actual one, but into a wild beast, capable of anything. Almost all of our noted political criminals—and especially the leaders—have been through this school."

[1] The meaning is that it is not addressed in the name of the Tsar.

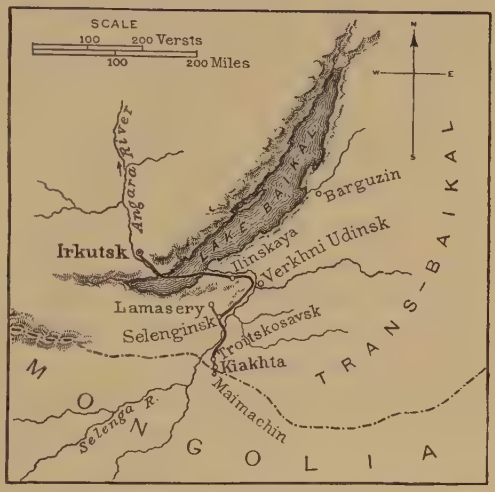
CHAPTER III

A VISIT TO THE SELENGÍNSK LAMASERY

THE latter part of our stay in the city of Irkútsk was devoted mainly to preparations for the journey that we were about to make through the little-known territory of the Trans-Baikál. We anticipated that this would be a very hard experience. The region that we purposed to explore was wilder and lonelier than any part of Siberia we had seen except the Altái; the convict mines, which we wished to inspect, were scattered over a rough, mountainous country thousands of square miles in extent, lying between the head-waters of the Amúr and the frontier of Mongolia; most of these mines were off the regular post roads, and were not laid down on the maps; we anticipated great difficulty in obtaining permission to visit them, and still greater difficulty in actually reaching them; and finally, we were about to plunge into this wilderness of the Trans-Baikál at the beginning of a semi-arctic winter, when storms and bitter cold would be added to the hardships with which we were already familiar. Owing to the fact that the territory of the Trans-Baikál had shortly before been detached from the governor-generalship of Eastern Siberia and annexed to the governor-generalship of the Amúr, we could not get in Irkútsk any assurance that permission to visit the mines would be granted us. In reply to my questions upon the subject Count Ignátief and Acting-Governor Petróf merely said, "The Trans-Baikál is out of our jurisdiction; for permission to visit the

mines you will have to apply to Governor-general Korf or to Governor Barabásh."

As both of the officials last named were at that time in Khabarófka, on the lower Amúr, nearly 1500 miles beyond the mines and 2000 miles from Irkútsk, the prospect of getting their permission did not seem to be very bright. We determined, however, to go ahead without permission, trusting to be saved, by luck and our own wits, from any serious trouble. Instead of proceeding directly to the mines, we decided to make a detour to the southward from Vérkhni Údinsk, for the purpose of visiting Kiákhta, the Mongolian frontier-town of Maimáchin, and the great Buddhist lamasery of Goose Lake. We were tired of prisons and the exile system; we had had misery enough for a while; and it seemed to me that we should be in better condition to bear the strain of the mines if we could turn our thoughts temporarily into other channels and travel a little, as boys say, "for fun." I was anxious, moreover, to see something of that corrupted form of the Buddhistic religion called Lamaism, which prevails so extensively in the Trans-Baikál, and which is there localized and embodied in the peculiar monastic temples known to the Russians as *datsáns*, or lamaseries. The lamasery of Goose Lake had been described to us in Irkútsk as one of the most interesting and important of these temples, for the reason that it was the residence of the Khambá Lamá, or Grand Lama



ROUTE FROM IRKÚTSK TO KIÁKHTA.

of Eastern Siberia. It was distant only thirty *versts* from the village of Selengínsk, through which we must necessarily pass on our way to Kiákhta; we could visit it without much trouble, and we decided, therefore, to make it our first objective point.

There are two routes by which it is possible to go from Irkútsk into the Trans-Baikál. The first and most direct of them follows the river Angará for about forty miles to its source in Lake Baikál, and then crosses that lake to the village of Boyárskaya. The second and longer route leads to Boyárskaya by a picturesque "cornice road," carried with much engineering skill entirely around the southern end of the lake, high above the water, on the slopes and cliffs of the circumjacent mountains. The "round-the-lake" route, on account of the beauty of its scenery, would probably have been our choice had it been open to us; but recent floods had swept away a number of bridges near the southwestern extremity of the lake, and thus for the time had put a stop to all through travel. There remained nothing for us to do, therefore, but to cross the lake by steamer.

In view of the near approach of winter, we decided to leave our heavy *tárantás* in Irkútsk for sale, and to travel, until snow should fall, in the ordinary wheel vehicles of the country, transferring our baggage from one conveyance to another at every post-station. This course of procedure is known in Siberia as traveling *na perekladníkh*, or "on transfers," and a more wretched, exasperating, body-bruising, and heart-breaking system of transportation does not anywhere exist. If we could have anticipated one-tenth part of the misery that we were to endure as a result of traveling "on transfers" in the Trans-Baikál, we should never have made the fatal mistake of leaving our roomy and comparatively comfortable *tárantás* in Irkútsk.

Thursday afternoon, September 24th, we ordered horses, stowed away our baggage in the small, springless vehicle

that was sent to us from the post-station, seated ourselves insecurely on the uneven surface made by furs, satchels, bread-bags, tea-boxes, felt boots, and the photographic apparatus, bade good-by to Lieutenant Schuetze, Mr. Bukófski, and Zhan, who had assembled in the courtyard to see us off, and finally, with a measured jangling of two or three discordant bells from the wooden arch over the thill-horse's back, rode out of the city and up the right bank of the Angará, on our way to Lake Baikál, the lamasery of Gusínnoí Ózera, Kiákhta, and the convict mines.

The weather was warm and sunshiny; there was a faint, soft autumnal haze in the air; and the foliage of the deciduous trees, although touched with color by the frost, had not yet fallen. Flowers still lingered here and there in sheltered places, and occasionally a yellow butterfly zigzagged lazily across the road ahead of us. The farmer's grain had everywhere been harvested, the last hay had been stacked, and in the courtyards of many of the village houses we noticed quantities of tobacco or hemp plant spread out in the sunshine to dry.

About half way between Irkútsk and the first post-station we met a man driving a team of four horses harnessed to a vehicle that looked like a menagerie-wagon, or a closed wild-beast cage. I asked our driver what it was, and he replied that he presumed it was the Siberian tiger that was to be brought to Irkútsk for exhibition from some place on the Amúr. A living tiger captured in Siberia seemed to us a novelty worthy of attention; and directing our driver to stop and wait for us, we ran back and asked the tiger's keeper if he would not open the cage and let us see the animal. He good-humoredly consented, and as we pressed eagerly up to the side of the wagon he took down the wide, thin boards that masked the iron grating. We heard a hoarse, angry snarl, and then before we had time to step back a huge, tawny beast striped with black threw himself against the frail bars with such tremendous violence and ferocity

that the wagon fairly rocked on its wheels, and we thought for a single breathless instant that he was coming through like a three-hundred-pound missile from a catapult. The grating of half-inch iron, however, was stronger and more firmly secured than it seemed to be; and although it was bent a little by the shock, it did not give way. The keeper seized a long, heavy iron bar and belabored the tiger with it through the grating until he finally lay down in one corner of the cage, snarling sullenly and fiercely like an enraged cat. I could not learn from the keeper the weight nor the dimensions of this tiger, but he seemed to me to be a splendid beast, quite as large as any specimen I had ever seen. He had been captured by some Russian peasants in the valley of the Amúr — one of the very few places on the globe where the tropical tiger meets the arctic reindeer.

The distance from Irkútsk to Lake Baikál is only forty miles; and as the road along the Angará was smooth and in good condition, we made rapid progress. The farther we went to the eastward, the higher and more picturesque became the banks of the river. On the last station they assumed an almost mountainous character, and along one side of the deep gorge formed by them the narrow, sinuous road was carried at a height of fifty or sixty feet above the water in an artificial cutting, bordered for miles at a time by a substantial guard-rail.

As it grew dark a cold, dense fog began to drift down the gorge from the lake; now hiding everything from sight except a short stretch of road hung apparently in misty mid-air, and then opening in great ragged rents, or gaps, through which loomed the dim but exaggerated outlines of the dark, craggy heights on the opposite shore. The surface of Lake Baikál is more than 400 feet higher than the city of Irkútsk, and the river Angará, through which the lake discharges into the arctic ocean, falls that 400 feet in a distance of 40 miles, making a current that is everywhere extremely swift, and that runs in some places at the

rate of 12 or 15 miles an hour. Steamers ply back and forth between the city and the lake, but they are six or eight hours in struggling up-stream, while they come down in about two. At the outlet, where the current is swiftest, the river never entirely freezes over, and it does not close opposite Irkútsk until some time in January, although the thermometer frequently goes to forty degrees below zero in December. The Angará is in all respects a peculiar and original river. Instead of coming into existence as a brook, it is born a mile wide with a current like a mill-race. Although its water, even in the hottest midsummer weather, is icy cold, it is the very last river in Siberia to freeze. It chills the adventurous bather to the bone in August, and then in the coldest weather of December steams as if it were boiling. Finally, it overflows its banks, not in the spring, when other rivers overflow theirs, but in early winter, when all other streams are locked in ice.

We reached the coast of Lake Baikál, at the village of Lístvinichnaya, about nine o'clock Thursday evening. A raw, chilly wind, laden with moisture, was blowing off the water, and the cell-like room to which we were shown in the small log hotel opposite the steamer-landing was so cold that as soon as possible we went to bed in our caps, boots, and heavy sheepskin overcoats. The words "went to bed" are, of course, to be understood figuratively. As a matter of fact, we simply lay down on the floor. We did not see a civilized bed in the Trans-Baikál, and I slept in all my clothing more than three-fourths of the time from the 1st of October to the 20th of March.

The steamer did not sail Friday until noon, and we therefore had ample time to study and sketch the lake port of Lístvinichnaya. It was a small village of perhaps a hundred insignificant log houses, scattered thinly along a single street, which extended for a mile or two up and down the lake between a range of high wooded hills and the water. The only harbor that the place could boast was a small

semi-inclosure made by a low breakwater, within which a side-wheel steamer called the *Platon* was lying quietly at anchor. The blue water of the lake was hardly more than rippled by a gentle north-easterly breeze, and far away beyond it could be seen a long line of snow-covered mountains in the

VILLAGE OF LÍSTVINICHNAYA.

Trans-Baikál. I was a little surprised to find the lake so narrow. Although it has a length of nearly 400 miles, its width at Lístvinichnaya is only 20 miles, and its average width not much more than 30. The opposite coast can therefore be seen from the steamer-landing with great distinctness; and as it is very high and mountainous, it can be traced by the eye for a distance of 60 or 70 miles.

Mr. Frost spent the greater part of Friday morning in making sketches of the village and the lake, while I returned to the hotel, after a short walk along the shore, and devoted myself to letter-writing. About half-past ten Frost came in and reported that the steamer *Buriát* with the mails from Irkútsk was in sight, that the *Platon* had made fast to the wharf, and that it was time to go on board. We walked down to the landing, engaged the only first-class stateroom on the steamer, had our baggage transferred to it, and then waited an hour and a half for the mails from the *Buriát*. They came on board at last; and the *Platon*, backing slowly

out of the encircling arm of the breakwater, started up the lake.

Our fellow-passengers did not number more than twenty or thirty, and most of them seemed to be traveling third-class on deck. The only persons who interested me were three or four Chinese traders, in their characteristic national dress, who spoke funny "pigeon Russian," and who were on their way to Kiákhta with about a thousand pounds of medicinal deer-horns.

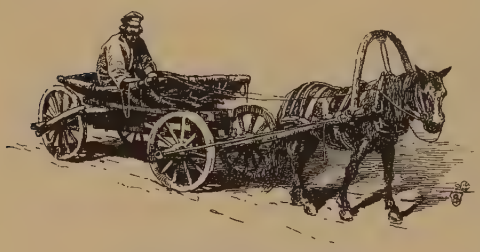
The eastern coast of the lake, as we steamed slowly northward, became lower, less mountainous, and less picturesque, and before dark the high, snow-covered peaks that we had seen from Lístvinichnaya vanished in the distance behind us. We arrived off Boyárskaya about six o'clock in the evening, but to our great disappointment were unable to land. A strong breeze was blowing down the lake, it was very dark, and the sea was so high that the captain could not get alongside the unsheltered wharf. He made three unsuccessful attempts, and then ran out into the lake and

LAKE BAIKÁL AND STEAMER-LANDING AT LÍSTVINICHNAYA.

anchored. We spent a very uncomfortable night on narrow benches in our prison cell of a stateroom, while the small steamer rolled and plunged on the heavy sea, and we were more than glad when morning finally dawned and the

Platon ran up to her wharf. But we did not know what the Trans-Baikál had in store for us. In less than forty-eight hours we should have been glad to get back on board that same steamer, and should have regarded our prison-cell stateroom as the lap of luxury.

We went ashore, of course, without breakfast; the weather was damp and chilly, with a piercing north-easterly wind; the wretched village of Boyárskaya contained no hotel; the post-station was cold, dirty, and full of travelers lying asleep on benches or on the mud-incrusted plank floor; there were no horses to carry us away from the place; and the outlook was discouraging generally. We were in a blue chill from hunger and cold before we could even find shelter. We succeeded at last in hiring "free" horses from a young peasant on the wharf; and after drinking tea and eating a little bread in his log cabin, we piled our baggage up in the shallow box of a small, springless *teléga*, climbed up on top of it, and set out for Selengínsk.

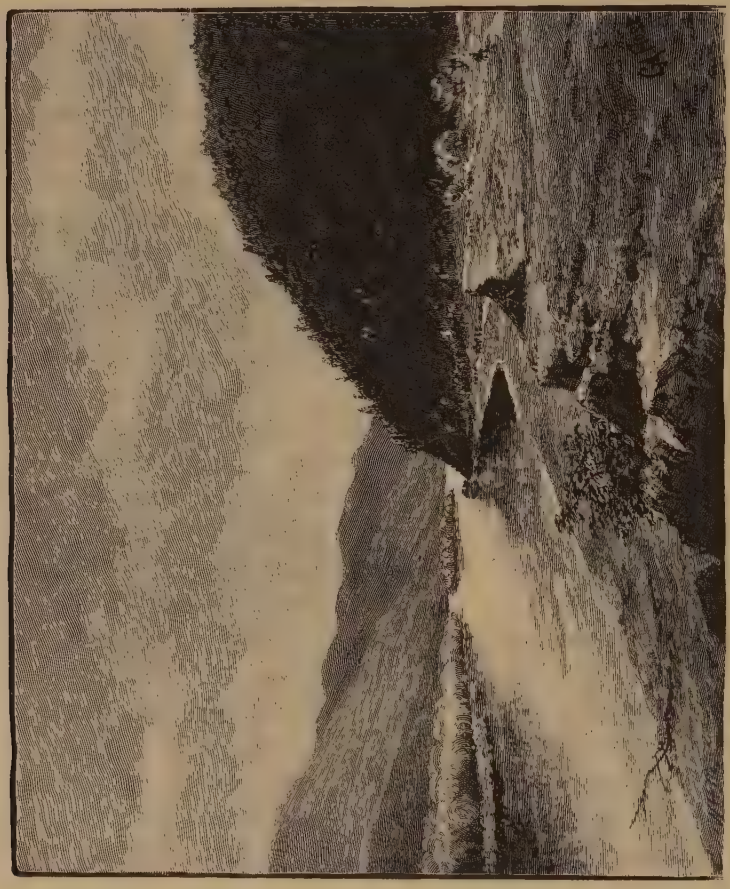


AN EAST-SIBERIAN TELÉGA.

On a bad, rough road an East-Siberian *teléga* of the type shown in the illustration on this page will simply jolt a man's soul out in less than twenty-four hours. Before we had traveled sixty miles in the Trans-Baikál I was so exhausted that I could hardly sit upright; my head and spine ached so violently, and had become so sensitive to shock, that every jolt was as painful as a blow from a club; I had tried to save my head by supporting my body on my bent arms until my arms no longer had any strength; and when we reached the post-station of Ílinskaya, at half-past ten o'clock Saturday night, I felt worse than at any time since crossing the Uráls. After drinking tea and eating a little

bread, which was all that we could get, we immediately went to bed, Frost lying on the floor near the oven, while I took a wooden bench beside the window. After a long struggle with parasitic vermin, I finally sank into a doze. I was almost immediately awakened by the arrival of an under-officer traveling on a Government *padorózhnaya.* Candles were lighted; the officer paced back and forth in our room, talking loudly with the station-master about the condition of the roads; and sleep, of course, was out of the question. In half an hour he went on with fresh horses, the lights were again put out, and we composed ourselves for slumber. In twenty minutes the post arrived from Irkútsk. The transferring of twelve *teléga*-loads of mail-bags from one set of vehicles to another, and the changing of about thirty horses, caused a general hubbub which lasted another hour. Every time the door was opened there was a rush of cold air into the overheated room, and we alternated between a state of fever and a state of chill. About half-past one o'clock in the morning the post finally got away, with much shouting and jangling of bells, the lights were put out, and the station again quieted down. We had hardly closed our eyes when the door was thrown wide open, and somebody stalked in shouting lustily in the dark for the station-master. This party of travelers proved to be a man, his wife, and a small baby with the croup. The woman improvised a bed for the infant on two chairs, and then she and her husband proceeded to drink tea. The hissing of the *samovár*, the rattling of dishes, the loud conversation, and the croupy coughing of the child kept us awake until about four o'clock, when this party also went on and the lights were once more extinguished. All the bedbugs in the house had by this time ascertained my situation, and in order to escape them I went and lay down on the floor beside Frost. In the brief interval of quiet that followed I almost succeeded in getting to sleep, but at half-past four there was another rush of cold air from the

door, and in came two corpulent merchants from the lower Amúr on their way to Irkútsk. They ordered the *samovár*, drank tea, smoked cigarettes, and discussed methods of gold-mining until half-past five, when, as there were no



SELENGÁ RIVER AND VALLEY.

horses, they began to consider the question of taking a nap. They had just decided that they would lie down for a while when the jangling of horse-bells in the courtyard announced another arrival, and in came a white-bearded old man with a shot-gun. Where he was going I don't know; but when he ordered the *samovár* and began an

animated conversation with the two merchants about gristmills I said to Frost, with a groan, "It 's no use. I have n't had a wink of sleep, I 've been tormented by bedbugs, I 've taken cold from the incessant opening of that confounded door and have a sharp pain through one lung, and I am going to get up and drink tea." It was then broad daylight. The white-bearded old man with the shot-gun invited us to take tea with him, and said he had seen us on the steamer. We talked about the newly discovered Mongolian gold placer known as the "Chinese California," which was then attracting the attention of the Siberian public, and under the stimulating influence of social intercourse and hot tea I began to feel a little less miserable and dejected.

About half-past ten o'clock Sunday morning we finally obtained horses, put our baggage into another rough, shallow *teléga*, and resumed our journey. The night had been cold, and a white frost lay on the grass just outside the village; but as the sun rose higher and higher the air lost its chill, and at noon we were riding without our overcoats. About ten *versts* from Ílinskaya the road turned more to the southward and ran up the left bank of the Selengá River, through the picturesque valley shown in the illustration on opposite page. The bold bluff on the right was a solid mass of canary-colored birches, with here and there a dull-red poplar; the higher and more remote mountains on the left, although not softened by foliage, were

> . . . bathed in the tenderest purple of distance,
> And tinted and shadowed by pencils of air;

while in the foreground, between the bluff and the mountains, lay the broad, tranquil river, like a Highland lake, reflecting in its clear depths the clumps of colored trees on its banks and the soft rounded outlines of its wooded islands. The valley of the Selengá between Ílinskaya and Vérkhni Údinsk seemed to me to be warmer and more

fertile than any part of the Trans-Baikál that we had yet seen. The air was filled all the afternoon with a sweet autumnal fragrance like that of ripe pippins; the hillsides were still sprinkled with flowers, among which I noticed asters, forget-me-nots, and the beautiful lemon-yellow alpine poppy; the low meadows adjoining the river were dotted with haystacks and were neatly fenced; and the log houses and barns of the Buriát farmers, scattered here and there throughout the valley, gave to the landscape a familiar and home-like aspect.

If we had felt well, and had had a comfortable vehicle, we should have enjoyed this part of our journey very much; but as the result of sleeplessness, insufficient food, and constant jolting, we had little capacity left for the enjoyment of anything. We passed the town of Vérkhni Údinsk at a distance of two or three miles late Sunday afternoon, and reached Múkhinskoe, the next station on the Kiákhta road, about seven o'clock in the evening. Mr. Frost seemed to be comparatively fresh and strong; but I was feeling very badly, with a pain through one lung, a violent headache, great prostration, and a pulse so weak as to be hardly perceptible at the wrist. I did not feel able to endure another jolt nor to ride another yard; and although we had made only thirty-three miles that day we decided to stop for the night. Since landing in the Trans-Baikál we had had nothing to eat except bread, but at Múkhinskoe the station-master's wife gave us a good supper of meat, potatoes, and eggs. This, together with a few hours of troubled sleep which the fleas and bedbugs permitted us to get near morning, so revived our strength that on Monday we rode seventy miles, and just before midnight reached the village of Selengínsk, near which was situated the lamasery of Goose Lake.

On the rough plank floor of the cold and dirty post-station house in Selengínsk we passed another wretched night. I was by this time in such a state of physical ex-

haustion that in spite of bedbugs and of the noise made by the arrival and departure of travelers I lost consciousness in a sort of stupor for two or three hours. When I awoke,

KHAINÚIEF MUNKÚ AND HIS CHILDREN.

however, at daybreak I found one eye closed and my face generally so disfigured by bedbug-bites that I was ashamed to call upon the authorities or even to show myself in the

street. Cold applications finally reduced the inflammation, and about ten o'clock I set out in search of the Buriát chief of police, Khainúief Munkú, who had been recommended to us as a good Russian and Buriát interpreter, and a man well acquainted with the lamasery that we desired to visit. I found Khainúief at the office of the district *isprávnik*, where he was apparently getting his orders for the day from the *isprávnik's* secretary. He proved to be a tall, athletic, heavily built Buriát, about sixty years of age, with a round head, closely cut iron-gray hair, a thick bristly mustache, small, half-closed Mongol eyes, and a strong, swarthy, hard-featured, and rather brutal face. He was dressed in a long, loose Buriát gown of some coarse grayish material, girt about the waist with a sash, and turned back and faced at the wrists with silk. His head was partly covered with a queer Mongol felt hat, shaped like a deep pie-dish, and worn with a sort of devil-may-care tilt to one side. The portrait of him on page 73 is from a photograph, and would give a very good idea of the man if the face were a little harder, sterner, and more brutal.

I introduced myself to the *isprávnik's* secretary, exhibited my open letters, and stated my business. "This is Khainúief Munkú," said the secretary, indicating the Buriát officer; "he can go to the lamasery with you if he likes."

As I looked more closely at the hard-featured, bullet-headed chief of police, it became apparent to me that he had been drinking; but he had, nevertheless, the full possession of his naturally bright faculties, and the severe judicial gravity of his demeanor as he coolly defrauded me out of six or eight *rúbles* in making the necessary arrangements for horses excited my sincere admiration. For his services as interpreter and for the use of three horses I paid him seventeen *rúbles*, which was more than the amount of his monthly salary. The money, however, was well invested, since he furnished us that day with much more than seventeen *rúbles'* worth of entertainment.

About an hour after my return to the post-station, Khainúief, in a peculiar clumsy gig called a *sidéika*, drove into the courtyard. He was transfigured and glorified almost beyond recognition. He had on a long, loose, ultramarine-blue silk gown with circular watered figures in it, girt about the waist with a scarlet sash and a light-blue silken scarf, and falling thence to his heels over coarse cow-hide boots. A dishpan-shaped hat of bright red felt was secured to his large round head by means of a colored string tied under his chin, and from this red hat dangled two long narrow streamers of sky-blue silk ribbon. He had taken six or eight more drinks, and was evidently in the best of spirits. The judicial gravity of his demeanor had given place to a grotesque middle-age friskiness, and he looked like an intoxicated Tatár prize-fighter masquerading in the gala dress of some color-loving peasant girl. I had never seen such an extraordinary chief of police in my life, and could not help wondering what sort of a reception would be given by his Serene Highness the Grand Lama to such an interpreter.

In a few moments the ragged young Buriát whom Khainúief had engaged to take us to the lamasery made his appearance with three shaggy Buriát horses and a rickety old *pavóska* not half big enough to hold us. I asked Khainúief if we should carry provisions with us, and he replied that we need not; that we should be fed at the lamasery. "But," he added, with a grin and a leer of assumed cunning, "if you have any insanity drops don't fail to take them along; insanity drops are always useful."

When we had put into the *pavóska* our blankets, sheepskin overcoats, the bread-bag, and my largest liquor-flask, Frost and I took seats at the rear end of the vehicle with our legs stretched out on the bottom, and Khainúief, who weighed at least two hundred pounds, sat on our feet. Not one of us was comfortable; but Frost and I had ceased to expect comfort in an East-Siberian vehicle, while Khainúief

had been so cheered and inebriated by the events of the morning, and was in such an *exalté* mental condition, that mere physical discomfort had no influence upon him whatever. He talked incessantly; but noticing after a time that we were disposed to listen rather than to reply, and imagining that our silence must be due to the overawing effect of his power and glory, he said to me with friendly and reassuring condescension, "You need n't remember that I am the chief of police; you can treat me and talk to me just as if I were a private individual."

I thanked him for his generous attempt to put us at our ease in his august presence, and he rattled on with all sorts of nonsense to show us how gracefully he could drop the mantle of a dread and mighty chief of police and condescend to men of low degree.

About five *versts* from the town we stopped for a moment to change positions, and Khainúief suggested that this would be a good time to try the "insanity drops." I gave him my flask, and after he had poured a little of the raw *vódka* into the palm of his hand and thrown it to the four cardinal points of the compass as a libation to his gods, he drank two cupfuls, wiped his wet, bristly mustache on the tail of his ultramarine blue silk gown, and remarked with cool impudence, "Prostáya kabáchnaya!" [Common gin-mill stuff!] I could not remember the Russian equivalent for the English proverb about looking a gift-horse in the mouth, but I suggested to Khainúief that it was not necessary to poison himself with a second cupful after he had discovered that it was nothing but "common gin-mill stuff." I noticed that poor as the stuff might be he did not waste any more of it on his north-south-east-and-west gods. The raw, fiery spirit had less effect upon him than I anticipated, but it noticeably increased the range of his self-assertion and self-manifestation. He nearly frightened the life out of our wretched driver by the fierceness with which he shouted "Yábo! Yábo!" [Faster! faster!], and when the poor driver

could not make his horses go any faster, Khainúief sprang upon him, apparently in a towering rage, seized him by the throat, shook him, choked him, and then, leaving him half dead from fright, turned to us with a bland, self-satisfied smile on his hard, weather-beaten old face, as if to say, "That 's the way I do it! You see what terror I inspire!" He looked very hard at every Buriát we passed, as if he suspected him of being a thief, shouted in a commanding, tyrannical voice at most of them, greeted the Chinese with a loud "How!" to show his familiarity with foreign languages and customs, and finally, meeting a picturesquely dressed and rather pretty Buriát woman riding into town astride on horseback, he made her dismount and tie her horse to a tree in order that he might kiss her. The woman seemed to be half embarrassed and half amused by this remarkable performance; but Khainúief, removing his red dish-pan hat with its long blue streamers, kissed her with "ornamental earnestness" and with a grotesque imitation of stately courtesy, and then, allowing her to climb back into her saddle without the least assistance, he turned to us with a comical air of triumph and smiling self-conceit which seemed to say, "There, what do you think of that? That 's the kind of man I am! *You* can't make a pretty woman get off her horse just to kiss you." He seemed to think that we were regarding all his actions and achievements with envious admiration, and as he became more and more elated with a consciousness of appearing to advantage, his calls for "insanity drops" became more and more frequent. I began to fear at last that before we should reach the lamasery he would render himself absolutely incapable of any service requiring judgment and tact, and that as soon as the Grand Lama should discover his condition he would order him to be ducked in the lake. But I little knew the Selengínsk chief of police.

The road that we followed from Selengínsk to the lamasery ran in a northwesterly direction up a barren, stony

valley between two ranges of low brownish hills, and the scenery along it seemed to me to be monotonous and uninteresting. I did not notice anything worthy of attention until we reached the crest of a high divide about twenty *versts* from Selengínsk and looked down into the valley of Goose Lake. There, between us and a range of dark blue mountains in the northwest, lay a narrow sheet of tranquil water, bounded on the left by a grassy steppe, and extending to the right as far as a projecting shoulder of the ridge would allow us to trace it. The shores of this lake were low and bare, the grass of the valley had turned yellow from frost or drought, there were no trees to be seen except on the higher slopes of the distant mountains, and the whole region had an appearance of sterility and desolation that suggested one of the steppes of the upper Írtish. On the other side of the lake, and near its western extremity, we could just make out from our distant point of view a large white building surrounded by a good-sized Buriát village of scattered log houses. It was the lamasery of Gusínnoi Ózera.

At sight of the sacred building, Khainúief, who was partly intoxicated at ten o'clock in the morning, and who had been taking "insanity drops" at short intervals ever since, became perceptibly more sober and serious; and when, half an hour later, we forded a deep stream near the western end of the lake, he alighted from the *pavóska* and asked us to wait while he took a cold bath. In about five minutes he reappeared perfectly sober, and resuming the severe judicial gravity of demeanor that characterized him as a Russian official, he proceeded to warn us that it would be necessary to treat the Grand Lama with profound respect. He seemed to be afraid that we, as Christians and foreigners, would look upon Khambá Lamá as a mere idolatrous barbarian, and would fail to treat him with proper deference and courtesy. I told him that we were accustomed to meet ecclesiastical authorities of the highest rank,

and that we knew perfectly well how to behave towards them. Feeling reassured on this point, Khainúief proceeded to consider the probable attitude of the Grand Lama towards us, and the statements that should be made to that high dignitary concerning us.

"How are you magnified?" he asked me suddenly, after a short reflective pause. He might as well have asked me, "How are you electrified?" or "How are you galvanized?" so far as the conveyance of any definite idea to my mind was concerned. I made no reply.

"What are you called in addition to your name?" he repeated, varying the form of his question. "What is your *chin* [rank]?"

"We have no *chin* in our country," said Mr. Frost; "we are simply private American citizens."

"Then you are not nobles?"

"No."

"You have no titles?"

"Not a title."

"You are not in the service of your Government?"

"No."

"Then for what purpose are you traveling in Siberia?"

"Merely for our own amusement."

"Then you must be rich?"

"No; we are not rich."

Khainúief was disappointed. He could not get any glory out of introducing to the Grand Lama two insignificant foreigners who had neither rank, title, nor position, who were confessedly poor, and who were not even traveling in the service of their Government.

"Well," he said, after a few moments' consideration, "when the Grand Lama asks you who you are and what your business is in Siberia, you may say to him whatever you like; but I shall translate that you are high *chinóvniks* —deputies, if not ambassadors—sent out by the Government of the great American—what did you say it was,

republic?—of the great American republic, to make a survey of Siberia and report upon it; and that it is not impossible that your Government may conclude to buy the country from our Góssudár."

"All right," I said laughing, "I don't care how you translate what I say to the Grand Lama; only don't expect me to help you out if you get into trouble."

Khainúief's face assumed again for a moment the expression of drunken cunning, self-conceit, and "friskiness" that it had worn earlier in the day, and it was evident that the mischievous-schoolboy half of the man looked forward with delight to the prospect of being able to play off two insignificant foreign travelers upon the Grand Lama for "high *chinóvniks*" and "deputies, if not ambassadors, of the great American republic."

As we drove into the little village of brown log houses that surrounded the lamasery, Khainúief became preternaturally grave, removed his blue-streamered red hat, and assumed an air of subdued, almost apprehensive, reverence. One might have supposed this behavior to be an expression of his profound respect for the sacred character of the place; but in reality it was nothing more than a necessary prelude to the little comedy that he purposed to play. He desired to show even the monks whom we passed in the street that he, the great Selengínsk chief of police, did not presume to smile, to speak, or to wear his hat in the majestic presence of the two Lord High Commissioners from the great American republic.

We drove directly to the house of the Grand Lama, in front of which we were met and received by four or five shaven-headed Buddhist acolytes in long brown gowns girt about the waist with dark sashes. Khainúief, still bareheaded, sprung out of the *pavóska*, assisted me to alight with the most exaggerated manifestations of respect, and supported me up the steps as carefully and reverently as if an accidental stumble on my part would be little short of

a great national calamity. Every motion that he made seemed to say to the Buriát monks and acolytes, "This man with the bedbug-bitten face, rumpled shirt, and short-tailed jacket does n't look very imposing, but he 's a high *chinóvnik* in disguise. You see how I have to behave towards him? It would be as much as my life is worth to put on my hat until he deigns to order it."

The house of the Grand Lama was a plain but rather large one-story log building, the main part of which was divided in halves by a central hall. We were shown into an icy-cold reception-room, furnished with an India-shawl pattern carpet of Siberian manufacture, a low couch covered with blue rep-silk, and a few heavy Russian tables and chairs. On the walls hung roller pictures of various holy temples in Mongolia and Thibet, life-size portraits by native artists of eminent Buddhist lamas and saints, coarse colored lithographs of Alexander II. and Alexander III., and a small card photograph of the Emperor William of Germany.

Khainúief presently came in and seated himself quietly on a chair near the door like a recently corrected schoolboy. There was not a trace nor a suggestion in his demeanor of the half-intoxicated, frisky, self-conceited Tatár prize-fighter who had made the Buriát woman get off her horse to kiss him. His eyes looked heavy and dull and showed the effects of the "insanity drops," but his manner and his self-control were perfect. He did not venture to address a word to us unless he was spoken to, and even then his voice was low and deferential. Once in a while, when none of the brown-gowned acolytes were in the room, his assumed mask of reverential seriousness would suddenly break up into a grin of cunning and drollery, and making a significant gesture with his hand to his mouth he would wink at me, as if to say, "I 'm only pretending to be stupid. I wish I had some insanity drops."

All the acolytes and servants in the place spoke, when they spoke at all, in low whispers, as if there were a dead

body in the house, or as if the Grand Lama were asleep and it would be a terrible thing if he should be accidentally awakened. The room into which we were at first shown was so damp and cellar-like that we were soon in a shiver. Noticing that we were cold, Khainúief respectfully suggested that we go into the room on the other side of the hall, which had a southern exposure and had been warmed a little by the sun. This was a plainer, barer apartment, with unpainted woodwork and furniture; but it was much more cheerful and comfortable than the regular reception-room.

We waited for the Grand Lama at least half an hour. At the expiration of that time Khainúief, who had been making a reconnaissance, came rushing back, saying, "Idyót!" [He 's coming!] In a moment the door opened, and as we rose hastily to our feet the Grand Lama entered. He wore a striking and gorgeous costume, consisting of a superb long gown of orange silk shot with gold thread, bordered with purple velvet, and turned back and faced at the wrists with ultramarine-blue satin so as to make wide cuffs. Over this beautiful yellow gown was thrown a splendid red silk scarf a yard wide and five yards long, hanging in soft folds from the left shoulder and gathered up about the waist. On his head he wore a high, pointed, brimless hat of orange felt, the extended sides of which fell down over his shoulders like the ends of a Russian *bashlík*, and were lined with heavy gold-thread embroidery. From a cord about his waist hung a large, flat, violet-velvet bag, which had a curiously wrought bronze stopper and which looked like a cloth bottle. Every part of the costume was made of the finest material, and the general effect of the yellow gown and hat, the dark-blue facings, the red scarf, and the violet bag was extremely brilliant and striking. The wearer of this rich ecclesiastical dress was a Buriát about sixty years of age, of middle height and erect figure, with a beardless, somewhat wrinkled, but strong and kindly face. He represented the northern Mongol rather than the Chinese type, and

THE GRAND LAMA.

seemed to be a man of some education and knowledge of the world. He greeted us easily and without embarrassment, and when we had all taken seats he listened with an impassive countenance to the ingenious but highly colored story into which Khainúief translated my modest account of ourselves, our plans, and our object in coming to the lamasery. Whether he believed it all or not I have no means of knowing; but from the subsequent course of events, and from statements made to me in Selengínsk after our return from Kiákhta, I am inclined to believe that Khainúief's diplomacy — not to give it a harsher name — was crowned with success. The bright-witted interpreter certainly played his part to perfection, and he even had the cool assurance to make me say to the Grand Lama that Governor Petróf in Irkútsk had particularly recommended him (Khainúief) to me as a valuable and trustworthy man, and that it was at the request of the governor that he came with us to the lamasery. The modest, deprecatory way in which he twisted into this form my innocent statement that Governor Petróf had sent a telegram about us to the authorities in the Trans-Baikál should have entitled the wily chief of police of Selengínsk to a high place among the great histrionic artists.

After we had drunk tea, which was served from a *samovár* in Russian style, I asked Khambá Lamá whether we should be permitted to inspect the temple. He replied that as soon as he had heard — through Khainúief of course — that such distinguished guests had come to call upon him he had given orders for a short thanksgiving service in the temple in order that we might see it. He regretted that he could not participate in this service himself, on account of recent illness; but Khainúief would go with us and see that we were provided with seats. We then saluted each other with profound bows, the Grand Lama withdrew to his own apartment, and Khainúief, Mr. Frost, and I set out for the temple.

An East-Siberian lamasery is always, strictly speaking, a monastic establishment. It is situated in some lonely place, as far away as possible from any village or settlement, and consists generally of a temple, or place of worship, and from 50 to 150 log houses for the accommodation of the lamas, students, and acolytes, and for the temporary shelter of pilgrims, who come to the lamasery in great

THE LAMASERY.

numbers on certain festival occasions. At the time of our visit three-fourths of the houses in the Goose Lake lamasery seemed to be empty. The *datsán*, or temple proper, stood in the middle of a large grassy inclosure formed by a high board fence. In plan it was nearly square, while in front elevation it resembled somewhat a three-story pyramid. It seemed to be made of brick covered with white stucco, and there was a great deal of minute ornamentation in red and black along the cornices and over the portico. A good idea of its general outline may be obtained from the small sketch on this page, which was made from a photograph.

Upon entering this building from the portico on the first floor we found ourselves in a spacious but rather dimly lighted hall, the dimensions of which I estimated at 80 feet by 65. Large round columns draped with scarlet cloth supported the ceiling; the walls were almost entirely hidden by pictures of holy places, portraits of saints, and

bright festooned draperies; while colored banners, streamers, and beautiful oriental lanterns hung everywhere in great profusion. The temple was so crowded with peculiar details that one could not reduce his observations to anything like order, nor remember half of the things that the eye noted; but the general effect of the whole was very striking, even to a person familiar with the interiors of Greek and Roman Catholic cathedrals. The impression made upon my mind by the decorations was that of great richness and beauty, both in color and in form. Across the end of the temple opposite the door ran a richly carved lattice-work screen, or partition, in front of which, equidistant one from another, were three large chairs or thrones. These thrones were covered with old-gold silk, were piled high with yellow cushions, and were intended for the Grand Lama, the Sheretúi, or chief lama of the *datsán*, and his assistant. The throne of the Grand Lama was vacant, but the other two were occupied when we entered the temple. In front of these thrones, in two parallel lines, face to face, sat seventeen lamas with crossed legs on long, high divans covered with cushions and yellow felt. Opposite each one, in the aisle formed by the divans, stood a small red table on which lay two or three musical instruments. The lamas were all dressed alike in orange silk gowns, red silk scarfs, and yellow helmet-shaped hats faced with red. On each side of the door as we entered was an enormous drum — almost as large as a hogshead—and the two lamas nearest us were provided with iron trumpets at least eight feet long and ten inches in diameter at the larger end. Both drums and trumpets were supported on wooden frames. Chairs were placed for us in the central aisle between the two lines of lamas, and we took our seats.

The scene at the beginning of the service was far more strange and impressive than I had expected it to be. The partial gloom of the temple, the high yellow thrones of the presiding dignitaries, the richness and profusion of the

decorations, the colossal drums, the gigantic trumpets, the somber crowd of students and acolytes in black gowns at one end of the room, and the two brilliant lines of orange and crimson lamas at the other made up a picture the strange barbaric splendor of which surpassed anything of

LAMAS AND THEIR MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

the kind that I have ever witnessed. For a moment after we took our seats there was a perfect stillness. Then the Sheretúi shook a little globular rattle, and in response to the signal there burst forth a tremendous musical uproar, made by the clashing of cymbals, the deep-toned boom of the immense drums, the jangling of bells, the moaning of conch-shells, the tooting of horns, the liquid tinkle of tri-

angles, and the hoarse bellowing of the great iron trumpets. It was not melody, it was not music; it was simply a tremendous instrumental uproar. It continued for about a minute, and then, as it suddenly ceased, the seventeen lamas began a peculiar, wild, rapid chant, in a deep, low monotone. The voices were exactly in accord, the time was perfect, and the end of every line or stanza was marked by the clashing of cymbals and the booming of the colossal drums. This chanting continued for three or four minutes, and then it was interrupted by another orchestral charivari which would have leveled the walls of Jericho without any supernatural intervention. I had never heard such an infernal tumult of sound. Chanting, interrupted at intervals by the helter-skelter playing of twenty or thirty different instruments, made up the "thanksgiving" temple service, which lasted about fifteen minutes. It was interesting, but it was quite long enough.

Mr. Frost and I then walked around the temple, accompanied by the Sheretúi and Khainúief. Behind the lattice-work screen there were three colossal idols in the conventional sitting posture of the Buddhists, and in front of each of them were lighted tapers of butter, porcelain bowls of rice, wheat, and millet, artificial paper flowers, fragrant burning pastils, and bronze bowls of consecrated water. Against the walls, all around this part of the temple, were bookcases with glass doors in which were thousands of the small figures known to the Christian world as "idols" and called by the Buriáts *burkháns*. I could not ascertain the reason for keeping so great a number of these figures in the lamasery, nor could I ascertain what purpose they served. They presented an almost infinite variety of types and faces; many of them were obviously symbolical, and all seemed to be representative in some way either of canonized mortals or of supernatural spirits, powers, or agencies. According to the information furnished me by Khainúief, these *burkháns*, or idols, occupy in the lamaistic system of

religious belief the same place that images or pictures of saints fill in the Russian system. From the appearance, however, of many of the idols in the lamasery collection, I concluded that a *burkhán* might represent an evil as well as a beneficent spiritual power. The word *burkhán* has long been used all over Mongolia in the general sense of a sacred or supernatural being.[1] Dr. Erman believes that "the Mongolian *burkhán* is identical with the Indian Buddha."[2] The *burkháns* in the lamasery of Goose Lake were crowded together on the shelves of the cases as closely as possible, and apparently no attempt had been made to arrange them in any kind of order. They varied in height from two inches to a foot, and were made generally of brass, bronze, or stone. In one corner of the *kumírnia*, or idol-room, stood a prayer-wheel, consisting of a large cylinder mounted on a vertical axis and supposed to be filled with written prayers or devotional formulas. I did not see it used, but in the Ónonski lamasery, which we visited a few weeks later, we found an enormous prayer-wheel which had a building to itself and which was in constant use.

From the idol-room we went into the upper stories of the temple, where there were more *burkháns* as well as a large collection of curious Mongolian and Thibetan books. If we had not been told that the objects last named were books, we never should have recognized them. They were rectangular sheets of thin Chinese paper twelve or fourteen inches in length by about four in width, pressed together between two thin strips of wood or pasteboard, and bound round with flat silken cords or strips of bright-colored cloth. They looked a little like large, well-filled bill-files tied with ribbons or crimson braid. The leaves were printed only on one side, and the characters were arranged in vertical columns. In a few of the volumes that I examined an at-

[1] See "Journey through Tartary, Thibet, and China," by M. Huc, Vol. I, pp. 120, 121. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1852.

[2] "Travels in Siberia," by Adolph Erman, Vol. II, p. 309. London: Longman, Brown, Green, & Longmans, 1848.

tempt apparently had been made to illuminate, with red and yellow ink or paint, the initial characters and the beginnings of chapters, but the work had been coarsely and clumsily done.

From the principal temple of the lamasery we were taken to a chapel or smaller building in the same inclosure to see the great image of Máidera, one of the most highly venerated *burkháns* in the lamaistic pantheon. It proved to be a colossal human figure in a sitting posture, skilfully carved out of wood and richly overlaid with colors and gold. I estimated its height at thirty-five feet. It stood in the center of a rather narrow but high-domed chapel, hung round with banners, streamers, and lanterns, and really was a very imposing object. Tapers and incense were burning upon an altar covered with silken drapery which stood directly in front of the great idol, and upon the same altar were offerings in the shape of flowers made out of hardened butter or wax, and a large number of bronze or porcelain bowls filled with millet, rice, wheat, oil, honey, or consecrated water. Some of these bowls were open so that their contents could be seen, while others were covered with napkins of red, blue, or yellow silk. Here, as in the great temple, the partial gloom was lighted up by the brilliant coloring of the decorations and draperies, and by the splendid orange and crimson dresses of the attendant lamas.

From the chapel of Máidera we were conducted to a third building in another part of the same inclosure, where we found ourselves in the presence of the sacred white elephant. I had always associated the white elephant with Siam, and was not a little surprised to find a very good imitation of that animal in an East-Siberian lamasery. The elephant of Goose Lake had been skilfully carved by some Buriát or Mongol lama out of hard wood, and had then been painted white, equipped with suitable trappings, and mounted on four low wheels. The sculptured elephant was somewhat smaller than the living animal, and his tusks had

been set at an angle that would have surprised a naturalist; but in view of the fact that the native artist probably never had seen an elephant, the resemblance of the copy to the

SACRED WHITE ELEPHANT AND SHRINE OF THE BURKHÁNS.

original was fairly close. The white elephant is harnessed, as shown in the above illustration, to a large four-wheel wagon, on which stands a beautiful and delicately carved shrine, made in imitation of a two-story temple. On the occasion of the great annual festival of the lamaists

in July a small image of one of the high gods is put into this shrine, and then the elephant and the wagon are drawn in triumphal procession around the lamasery to the music of drums, trumpets, conch-shells, cymbals, and gongs, and with an escort of perhaps three hundred brilliantly costumed lamas.

While we were examining the white elephant, Khainúief came to me and said that Khambá Lamá, in view of the fact that we were the first foreigners who had ever visited the lamasery, had ordered an exhibition to be given for us of the sacred "dance of the *burkháns*." I strongly suspected that we were indebted for all these favors to Khainúief's unrivaled skill as a translator of truth into fiction; but if we had been introduced to the Grand Lama as "deputies, if not ambassadors, from the great American republic," it was in no sense our fault, and there was no reason why we should not accept the courtesies offered us.

When we returned to the great temple we found that everything was in readiness for the dance. It was to take place out of doors on the grass in front of the *datsán*, where seats had already been prepared for the musicians and for the Sheretúi and his assistant. The big drums and the eight-foot iron trumpets were brought out, the presiding lamas seated themselves cross-legged on piles of flat yellow cushions in their chairs, and we took the positions assigned to us. At the sounding of a small rattle twelve or fifteen of the strangest, wildest-looking figures I had ever seen rushed out into the open space in front of the temple, and to the crashing, booming accompaniment of cymbals and big iron trumpets began a slow, rhythmical, leaping dance. Four or five of the dancers had on enormous black helmet masks representing grinning Mongolian demons, and from their heads radiated slender rods to which were affixed small colored flags. Two figures had human skulls or death's-heads on their shoulders, one man's body had the head and antlers of a *marál*, or Siberian stag, and another was surmounted by the head and horns of a bull. Three

THE DANCE OF THE BURKHÁNS.

or four dancers, who represented good spirits and defenders of the faith, and who were without masks, wore on their heads broad-brimmed hats with a heart-shaped superstructure of gold open-work, and were armed with naked daggers. It seemed to be their province to drive the black-masked demons and the skull-headed figures out of the field. The dresses worn by all the dancers were of extraordinary richness and beauty, and were so complicated and full of detail that two or three pages would be needed for a complete and accurate description of a single one of them. The materials of the costumes were crimson, scarlet, blue, and orange silk, old-gold brocade, violet velvet, satin of various colors, bright-colored cords, tassels, and fringes, wheel-shaped silver brooches supporting festooned strings of white beads, and gold and silver ornaments in infinite variety, which shone and flashed in the sunlight as the figures pirouetted and leaped hither and thither, keeping time to the measured clashing of cymbals and booming of the great drums. The performance lasted about fifteen minutes, and the last figures to retire were the *burkháns* with the golden lattice-work hats and the naked daggers. It seemed to me evident that this sacred "dance of the *burkháns*" was a species of religious pantomime or mystery play; but I could not get through Khainúief any intelligible explanation of its significance.

When we returned to the house of the Grand Lama we found ready a very good and well-cooked dinner, with fruit cordial and madeira to cheer the "ambassadors," and plenty of *vódka* to inebriate Khainúief. After dinner I had a long talk with the Grand Lama about my native country, geography, and the shape of the earth. It seemed very strange to find anywhere on the globe, in the nineteenth century, an educated man and high ecclesiastical dignitary who had never even heard of America, and who did not feel at all sure that the world is round. The Grand Lama was such a man.

"You have been in many countries," he said to me through the interpreter, "and have talked with the wise men of the West; what is your opinion with regard to the shape of the earth?"

"I think," I replied, "that it is shaped like a great ball."

"I have heard so before," said the Grand Lama, looking thoughtfully away into vacancy. "The Russian officers whom I have met have told me that the world is round. Such a belief is contrary to the teachings of our old Thibetan books, but I have observed that the Russian wise men predict eclipses accurately; and if they can tell beforehand when the sun and the moon are to be darkened, they probably know something about the shape of the earth. Why do you think that the earth is round?"

"I have many reasons for thinking so," I answered; "but perhaps the best and strongest reason is that I have been around it."

This statement seemed to give the Grand Lama a sort of mental shock.

"How have you been around it?" he inquired. "What do you mean by 'around it'? How do you know that you have been around it?"

"I turned my back upon my home," I replied, "and traveled many months in the course taken by the sun. I crossed wide continents and great oceans. Every night the sun set before my face and every morning it rose behind my back. The earth always seemed flat, but I could not find anywhere an end nor an edge; and at last, when I had traveled more than thirty thousand *versts*, I found myself again in my own country and returned to my home from a direction exactly opposite to that which I had taken in leaving it. If the world was flat, do you think I could have done this?"

"It is very strange," said the Grand Lama, after a thoughtful pause of a moment. "Where is your country? How far is it beyond St. Petersburg?"

"My country is farther from St. Petersburg than St. Petersburg is from here," I replied. "It lies nearly under our feet; and if we could go directly through the earth, that would be the shortest way to reach it."

"Are your countrymen walking around there heads downward under our feet?" asked the Grand Lama with evident interest and surprise, but without any perceptible change in his habitually impassive face.

"Yes," I replied; "and to them we seem to be sitting heads downward here."

The Grand Lama then asked me to describe minutely the route that we had followed in coming from America to Siberia, and to name the countries through which we had passed. He knew that Germany adjoined Russia on the west, he had heard of British India and of England,—probably through Thibet,—and he had a vague idea of the extent and situation of the Pacific Ocean; but of the Atlantic and of the continent that lies between the two great oceans he knew nothing.

After a long talk, in the course of which we discussed the sphericity of the earth from every possible point of view, the Grand Lama seemed to be partly or wholly convinced of the truth of that doctrine, and said, with a sigh, "It is not in accordance with the teachings of our books; but the Russians must be right."

It is a somewhat remarkable fact that Dr. Erman, one of the few foreigners who had seen the lamasery of Goose Lake previous to our visit, had an almost precisely similar conversation concerning the shape of the earth with the man who was then (in 1828) Grand Lama. Almost sixty years elapsed between Dr. Erman's visit and ours, but the doctrine of the sphericity of the earth continued throughout that period to trouble ecclesiastical minds in this remote East-Siberian lamasery; and it is not improbable that sixty years hence some traveler from the western world may be asked by some future Grand Lama to give his reasons for believing the world to be a sphere.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, after exchanging photographs with the Grand Lama, thanking him for his courtesy and hospitality, and bidding him a regretful good-by, we were lifted carefully into our old *pavóska* by the anxious, respectful, and bare-headed Khainúief in the presence of a crowd of black-robed acolytes and students, and began our journey back to Selengínsk.

CHAPTER IV

A RIDE THROUGH THE TRANS-BAIKÁL

ABOUT nine o'clock Tuesday evening we returned from the lamasery, and at eleven o'clock on the same night we ordered post-horses at Selengínsk and set out for the Russo-Mongolian frontier town of Kiákhta, distant about sixty miles. We ought to have arrived there early on the following morning; but in Siberia, and particularly in the Trans-Baikál, the traveler is always detained more or less by petty unforeseen accidents and misadventures. We were stopped at midnight about six *versts* from Selengínsk by an unbridged river. Communication between the two shores was supposed to be maintained by means of a *karbás*, or rude ferryboat; but as this boat happened to be on the other side of the stream, it was of no use to us unless we could awaken the ferryman by calling to him. Singly and in chorus we shouted "Kar-ba-a-a-s!" at short intervals for an hour, without getting any response except a faint mocking echo from the opposite cliffs. Cold, sleepy, and discouraged, we were about to give it up for the night and return to Selengínsk, when we saw the dark outlines of a low, raft-like boat moving slowly up-stream in the shadow of the cliffs on the other side. It was the long-looked-for *karbás*. In half an hour we were again under way on the southern side of the river, and at three o'clock in the morning we reached the post-station of Povorótnaya. Here, of course, there were no horses. The station-house was already full of travelers asleep on the floor, and there was

nothing for us to do except to lie down in an unoccupied corner near the oven, between two Chinese and a pile of medicinal deer-horns, and to get through the remainder of the night as best we could.

All day Wednesday we rode southward through a rather dreary and desolate region of sandy pine barrens or wide stretches of short dead grass, broken here and there by low hills covered with birches, larches, and evergreens. Now and then we met a train of small one-horse wagons loaded with tea that had come overland across Mongolia from Pekin, or two or three mounted Buriáts in dishpan-shaped hats and long brown *kaftáns*, upon the breasts of which had been sewn zigzags of red cloth that suggested a rude Mongolian imitation of the Puritan "scarlet letter." As a rule, however, the road seemed to be little traveled and scantily settled, and in a ride of nearly fifty miles we saw nothing of interest except here and there on the summits of hills small sacred piles of stones which Mr. Frost called "Buriát shrines." All over Siberia it is the custom of the natives when they cross the top of a high hill or mountain to make a propitiatory offering to the spirits of storm and tempest. In the extreme northeastern part of Siberia these offerings consist generally of tobacco, and are thrown out on the ground in front of some prominent and noticeable rock; but in the Trans-Baikál the Buriáts and Mongols are accustomed to pile a heap of stones beside the road, erect thereon half a dozen rods or poles, and suspend from the

A WEALTHY BURIÁT AND WIFE.

latter small pieces of their clothing. Every pious traveler who passes a shrine of this sort on the summit of a mountain is expected to alight from his vehicle or dismount from his horse, tear off a little piece of his *kaftán* or his shirt, hang it up on one of these poles, and say a prayer. As a result of this ceremonial, every shrine presents to the traveler a sort of tailor's collection of scraps and remnants of cloth of every conceivable kind, quality, and color, fluttering to the wind from slender poles that look like hastily improvised fishing-rods. Theoretically this custom would seem to be not wholly without its advantages. If a native was familiar with the clothing of his friends he could always tell by a simple inspection of one of these shrines who had lately passed that way, and, if necessary, he could trace any particular person from hilltop to hilltop by the strips of his shirt or the frayed edges of his trousers left hanging on the stone-ballasted fishing-rods as an offering to the mighty gods of the Siberian tempests. In practice, however, this might not be feasible unless one could remember all the old clothes of the person whom one wished to trace, and all the ancestral rags and tatters of that person's family. From a careful examination that we made of a number of shrines we became convinced that every pious Buriát keeps a religious rag-bag, which he carries with him when he travels, and to which he has recourse whenever it becomes necessary to decorate the sacred fishing-poles of the storm-gods. I am sure that such miserable, decayed scraps and tatters of raiment as we saw fluttering in the wind over the shrines between Selengínsk and Kiákhta never could have been cut or torn from any garments that were actually in wear.

PROPITIATORY OFFERINGS OF THE BURIÁTS.

The weather all day Wednesday was raw and cold, with occasional squalls of rain or snow. We could get little to

eat at the post-stations, and long before it grew dark we were faint, hungry, and chilled to the bone. Nothing could have been more pleasant under such circumstances than to see at last the cheerful glow of the fire-lighted windows in the little log houses of Tróitskosávsk, two miles and a half north of the Mongolian frontier.

The three towns of Tróitskosávsk, Kiákhta, and Maimáchin are so situated as to form one almost continuous settlement extending across the Russo-Mongolian frontier about a hundred miles south and east of Lake Baikál. Tróitskosávsk and Kiákhta are on the northern side of the boundary line, while Maimáchin is on the southern or Mongolian side and is separated from Kiákhta by a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards of unoccupied neutral ground. Of the three towns Tróitskosávsk is the largest, and from an administrative point of view the most important; but Kiákhta is nearest to the border and is best known by name to the world.

Acting upon the advice of a merchant's clerk whose acquaintance we had made on the Lake Baikál steamer, we drove through Tróitskosávsk to Kiákhta and sought shelter in a house called "Sókolof's," which the merchant's clerk had given us to understand was a good and comfortable hotel. When after much search we finally found it, we were surprised to discover that there was not a sign of a hotel about it. The house stood in the middle of a large, wall-inclosed yard, its windows were dark, and although the hour was not a very late one the courtyard gate was shut and closely barred. After shouting, knocking, and kicking at the gate for five or ten minutes we succeeded in arousing a sharp-tongued maid-servant, who seemed disposed at first to regard us as burglars or brigands. Upon becoming assured, however, that we were only peaceable travelers in search of lodgings, she informed us with some asperity that this was not a hotel, but a private house. Mr. Sókolof, she said, sometimes received travelers who

came to him with letters of introduction; but he did not open his doors to people whom nobody knew anything about, and the best thing we could do, in her opinion, was to go back to Tróitskosávsk. As we had no letters of introduction, and as the young woman refused to open the gate or hold any further parley with us, there was obviously nothing for us to do but to recognize the soundness of her judgment and take her advice. We therefore climbed into our *teléga*, drove back to Tróitskosávsk, and finally succeeded in finding there a Polish exile named Klembótski, who kept a bakery and who had a few rooms that he was willing to rent, even to travelers who were not provided with letters of introduction. As it was after ten o'clock, and as we despaired of finding a better place, we ordered our baggage taken to one of Mr. Klembótski's rooms. It did not prove to be a very cheerful apartment. The floor was made of rough-hewn planks, the walls were of squared logs chinked with hemp-fibers, there was no furniture except a pine table, three stained pine chairs, and a narrow wooden couch or bedstead, and all guests were expected to furnish their own bedding. After a meager supper of tea and rolls we lay down on the hard plank floor and tried to get to sleep, but were forced, as usual, to devote a large part of the night to researches and investigations in a narrowly restricted and uninteresting department of entomology. Thursday forenoon we hired a peculiar Russian variety of Irish jaunting-car, known in Siberia as a *dálgúshka*, and set out for Kiákhta, where we intended to call upon a wealthy Russian tea-merchant named Lúshnikof, who had been recommended to us by friends in Irkútsk.

Tróitskosávsk, Kiákhta, and Maimáchin are situated in a shallow and rather desolate valley, beside a small stream that falls into the Selengá River. The nearly parallel and generally bare ridges that form this valley limit the vision in every direction except to the southward, where, over the housetops and gray wooden walls of Maimáchin, one may

catch a glimpse of blue, hazy mountains far away in Mongolia. Kiákhta, which stands on the border-line between Mongolia and Siberia, does not appear at first sight to be anything more than a large, prosperous village. It con-

A GENERAL VIEW OF KIÁKHTA, SHOWING THE "NEUTRAL GROUND."

tains a greater number of comfortable-looking two-story log dwelling-houses than are to be found in most East-Siberian villages, and it has one or two noticeable churches of the Russo-Greek type with white walls and belfries surmounted by colored or gilded domes; but one would

never suppose it to be the most important commercial point in Eastern Siberia. Through Kiákhta, nevertheless, pass into or out of Mongolia every year Russian and Chinese products to the value of from twenty to thirty million *rúbles* ($10,000,000 to $15,000,000). Nearly all of the famous "overland" tea consumed in Russia is brought across Mongolia in caravans from northern China, enters the Empire through Kiákhta, and after being carefully repacked and sewn up in raw hides is transported across Siberia a distance of nearly four thousand miles to St. Petersburg, Moscow, or the great annual fair of Nízhni Nóvgorod. Through Kiákhta are also imported into Russia silks, crapes, and other distinctively Chinese products, together with great quantities of compressed, or "brick," tea for the poorer classes of the Russian people and for the Kírghis, Buriáts, and other native tribes. The chief exports to the Chinese Empire are Russian manufactures, medicinal deer-horns, ginseng, furs, and precious metals in the shape of Russian, English, and American coins. Even the silver dollars of the United States find their way into the Flowery Kingdom through Siberia. Among the Russian merchants living in Kiákhta are men of great wealth, some of whom derive from their commercial transactions in general, and from the tea trade in particular, incomes varying from $75,000 to $150,000 per annum.

We found Mr. Lúshnikof living in a comfortably furnished two-story house near the center of the town, and upon introducing ourselves as American travelers were received with the sincere and cordial hospitality that seems to be characteristic of Russians everywhere, from Bering Strait to the Baltic Sea. In the course of lunch, which was served soon after our arrival, we discussed the "sights" of Kiákhta and Maimáchin, and were informed by Mr. Lúshnikof that in his opinion there was very little in either town worthy of a foreign traveler's attention. Maimáchin might perhaps interest us if we had never seen a Chinese

or Mongolian city, but Kiákhta did not differ essentially from other Siberian settlements of its class.

After a moment's pause he asked suddenly, as if struck by a new thought, "Have you ever eaten a Chinese dinner?"

"Never," I replied.

"Well," he said, "then there is one new experience that I can give you. I 'll get up a Chinese dinner for you in Maimáchin day after to-morrow. I know a Chinese merchant there who has a good cook, and although I cannot promise you upon such short notice a dinner of more than forty courses, perhaps it will be enough to give you an idea of the thing."

We thanked him, and said that although we had had little to eat since entering the Trans-Baikál except bread and tea, we thought that a dinner of forty courses would be fully adequate to satisfy both our appetites and our curiosity.

From the house of Mr. Lúshnikof we went to call upon the Russian boundary commissioner, Mr. Sulkófski, who lived near at hand and who greeted us with as much informal good-fellowship as if we had been old friends. We were very often surprised in these far-away parts of the globe to find ourselves linked by so many persons and associations to the civilized world and to our homes. In the house of Mr. Lúshnikof, for example, we had the wholly unexpected pleasure of talking in English with Mrs. Hamilton, a cultivated Scotch lady, who had come to Kiákhta across China and Mongolia and had been for several years a member of Mr. Lúshnikof's family. In the person of the Russian boundary commissioner we were almost as much surprised to find a gentleman who had met many officers of the *Jeannette* arctic exploring expedition—including Messrs. Melville and Danenhower; who had seen the relief steamer *Rodgers* in her winter quarters near Bering Strait; and who was acquainted with Captain Berry of that vessel and with the *Herald* correspondent, Mr. Gilder.

After another lunch and a pleasant chat of an hour or more with Mr. Sulkófski, Frost and I returned to Tróitskosávsk and spent the remainder of the afternoon in exploring the bazar, or town market, and the queer Chinese and

BAZAR AND CHINESE SHOPS IN TRÓITSKOSÁVSK.

Mongolian shops shown in the above illustration. In one of these shops we were astonished to find an old second-hand copy of Dickens's *All the Year Round*. How it came there I could hardly imagine, but it seemed to me that if the periodical literature of Great Britain was represented in one of the shops of the Tróitskosávsk bazar we ought to find there also a copy of some American magazine left by a

"globe-trotter" from the United States. My professional and patriotic pride would not allow me to admit for a moment that *All the Year Round* might have a larger circulation in outer Mongolia than *The Century Magazine.* After long and diligent search in a queer, dark, second-hand booth kept by a swarthy Mongol, I was rewarded by the discovery of a product of American genius that partly satisfied my patriotism, and served as a tangible proof that New England marks the time to which all humanity keeps step. It was an old, second-hand clock, made in Providence, Rhode Island, the battered and somewhat grimy face of which still bore in capital letters the characteristic American legend, "Thirty Hour Joker." Mongolia might know nothing of American literature or of American magazines, but it had made the acquaintance of the American clock; and although this particular piece of mechanism had lost its hands, its "Thirty Hour Joker" was a sufficiently pointed allusion to the national characteristic to satisfy the most ardent patriotism. An American joker does not need hands to point out the merits of his jokes, and this mutilated New England clock, with its empty key-hole eyes and its battered but still humorous visage, seemed to leer at me out of the darkness of that queer, old, second-hand shop as if to say, "You may come to Siberia, you may explore Mongolia, but you can't get away from the American joker." I was a little disappointed not to find in this bazar some representative masterpiece of American literature, but I was more than satisfied a short time afterward when I discovered in a still wilder and more remote part of the Trans-Baikál a copy of Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi," and a Russian translation of Bret Harte's "Luck of Roaring Camp."

On Friday, October 2d, Mr. Frost and I again visited Kiákhta and went with the boundary commissioner, Mr. Sulkófski, to call upon the Chinese governor of Maimáchin. The Mongolian town of Maimáchin is separated from Kiákhta by a hundred and fifty or two hundred yards of

neutral ground, through the middle of which is supposed to run the boundary line between the two great empires. Maimáchin is further separated from Kiákhta by a high plank wall and by screens, or pagoda-shaped buildings, that mask the entrances to the streets so that the outside barbarian cannot look into the place without actually entering it, and cannot see anything beyond its wooden walls after he has entered it. It would be hard to imagine a more sudden and startling change than that brought about by a walk of two hundred yards from Kiákhta to Maimáchin. One moment you are in a Russian provincial village with its characteristic shops, log houses, golden-domed churches, *dróshkies*, soldiers, and familiar peasant faces; the next moment you pass behind the high screen that conceals the entrance to the Mongolian town and find yourself apparently in the middle of the Chinese Empire. You can hardly believe that you have not been suddenly transported on the magical carpet of the "Arabian Nights" over a distance of a thousand miles. The town in which you find yourself is no more like the town that you have just left than a Zuñi pueblo is like a village in New England, and for all that appears to the contrary you might suppose yourself to be separated from the Russian Empire by the width of a whole continent. The narrow, unpaved streets are shut in by gray, one-story houses, whose windowless walls are made of clay mixed with chopped straw, and whose roofs, ornamented with elaborate carving, show a tendency to turn up at the corners; clumsy two-wheel ox-carts, loaded with boxes of tea and guided by swarthy Mongol drivers, have taken the place of the Russian horses and *telégas;* Chinese traders in skull-caps, loose flapping gowns, and white-soled shoes appear at the doors of the courtyards instead of the Russian merchants in top-boots, loose waistcoats, and shirts worn outside their trousers whom you have long been accustomed to see; and wild-looking sunburned horsemen in deep orange gowns and dishpan-

shaped hats ride in now and then from some remote encampment in the great desert of Gobi, followed, perhaps, by a poor Mongol from the immediate neighborhood,

A STREET IN MAIMÁCHIN.

mounted upon a slow-pacing ox. Wherever you go, and in whatever direction you look, China has taken the place of Russia, and the scenes that confront you are full of strange, unfamiliar details.

We drove with a Russo-Chinese interpreter to the residence of the *surguchéi*, or Chinese governor,—which was distinguished from all other houses by having two high poles tipped with gilded balls erected in front of it,—and after being introduced to his Excellency by Mr. Sulkófski were invited to partake of tea, sweetmeats, and *máigalo*, or Chinese rice-brandy. We exchanged with the governor a number of ceremonious and not at all exciting inquiries and replies relative to his and our health, affairs, and general well-being, drank three or four *sáki*-cups of *máigalo*, nibbled at some candied fruits, and then, as the hour for his devotions had arrived, went with him by invitation to the temple and saw him say his prayers before a large wooden idol to an accompaniment made by the slow tolling of a big, deep-toned bell. The object of the bell-ringing seemed to be to notify the whole population of the town that his Excellency the governor was communing with his Joss. When we returned to his house Mr. Frost drew a portrait of him as with an amusing air of conscious majesty he sat upon a tiger-skin in his chair of state, and then, as we had no excuse for lingering longer, we took our leave, each of us receiving a neatly tied package in which were the nuts, sweetmeats, and candied fruits that had been set before us but had not been eaten.

We wasted the rest of the afternoon in trying to get photographs of some of the strange types and groups that were to be seen in the Maimáchin streets. Again and again we were surrounded by forty or fifty Mongols, Buriáts, and nondescript natives from the great southern steppes, and again and again we set up the camera and trained it upon a part of the picturesque throng. Every time Mr. Frost covered his head with the black cloth and took off the brass cap that concealed the instrument's Cyclopean eye, the apprehensive Celestials vanished with as much celerity as if the artist were manipulating a Gatling gun. We could clear a whole street from one end to the

other by merely setting up the camera on its tripod and getting out the black cloth, and I seriously thought of advising the Chinese governor to send to America for a photo-

TYPES OF BURIÁTS, CHINESE, AND MONGOLS IN MAIMÁCHIN.

graphic outfit to be used in quelling riots. He could disperse a mob with it more quickly and certainly than with a battery of mountain howitzers. If I remember rightly, Mr. Frost did not succeed in getting pictures of any animated objects that day except a few Mongol ox-teams and two or

three blind or crippled beggars who could not move rapidly enough to make their escape. At a later hour that same afternoon, in the bazar of Tróitskosávsk, he came near being mobbed while trying to make a pencil drawing of a fierce-looking Mongol trader, and was obliged to come home with his sketch unfinished. We both regretted, as we had regretted many times before, that we had neglected to provide ourselves with a small detective camera. It might have been used safely and successfully in many places where the larger instrument excited fear or suspicion.

Our Chinese dinner in Maimáchin Saturday afternoon was a novel and interesting experience. It was given in the counting-house of a wealthy Chinese merchant, and the guests present and participating comprised six or eight ladies and gentlemen of Mr. Lúshnikof's acquaintance, as well as Mr. Frost and me. The table was covered with a white cloth, and was furnished with plates, cups and saucers, knives and forks, etc., in the European fashion. Ivory chopsticks were provided for those who desired them, but they were used by the Russian and American guests only in a tentative and experimental way. When we had all taken seats at the table a glass flagon containing a peculiar kind of dark-colored Chinese vinegar was passed round, and every guest poured about half a gill of it into a small saucer beside his plate.

"What is the vinegar for?" I asked Mr. Lúshnikof.

"To dip your food in," he replied. "The Chinese in Maimáchin eat almost everything with vinegar. It is n't bad."

As I had not the faintest idea what was coming in the shape of food, I reserved my judgment as to the expediency of using vinegar, and maintained an attitude of expectancy. In a few moments the first course was brought in. I will not undertake to say positively what it was, but I find it described in my note-book as "a prickly seaweed or sea-plant of some kind, resembling stiff moss." It had presum-

ably been boiled or cooked in some way, but I cannot venture to affirm anything whatever with regard to it except that it was cold and had a most disagreeable appearance. Each of the Russian guests took a small quantity of it, sopped a morsel in the dark-colored vinegar, and ate it, if not with relish, at least with heroic confidence and composure. There was nothing for Mr. Frost and me to do but to follow the example. The next nine courses, taking them in order, I find described in my note-book as follows:

1. Shreds of cold meat embedded in small diamond-shaped molds of amber-colored jelly.
2. Black mushrooms of a species to me unknown.
3. Salad of onions and finely shredded herbs.
4. Lichens from birch-trees.
5. Thin slices of pale, unwholesome-looking sausage, component materials unknown.
6. Small diamonds, circles, and squares of boiled egg, dyed in some way so as to resemble scraps of morocco leather.
7. The tails of crawfish fried brown.
8. Long-fronded seaweed of a peculiar grass-green color.
9. Curly fibers of some marine plant that looked like shredded cabbage.

I do not pretend to say that these brief entries in my note-book describe with scientific accuracy the articles of food to which they relate. I did not know, and could not find out, what many of the courses were, and all I could do was to note down the impression that they made upon me, and call them by the names of the things that they seemed most to resemble. All of these preparations, without exception, were served cold and were eaten with vinegar. Over a brazier of coals on a broad divan near the table stood a shallow pan of hot water, in which were half immersed three or four silver pots or pitchers containing the colorless rice-brandy known as *máigalo*. After every course of the dinner a servant went round the table with one of

these pitchers and filled with the hot liquor a small porcelain cup like a Japanese *sáki*-cup that had been placed beside every guest's plate.

I had heard a short time before this an anecdote of an ignorant East-Siberian peasant, who in making an excavation for some purpose found what he supposed to be the almost perfectly preserved remains of a mammoth. With the hope of obtaining a reward he determined to report this extraordinary find to the *isprávnik*, and in order to make his story more impressive he tasted some of the flesh of the extinct beast so that he could say to the police officer that the animal was in such a state of preservation as to be actually eatable. An investigation was ordered, a scientist from the Irkútsk Geographical Society was sent to the spot, and the remains of the mammoth were found to be a large deposit of the peculiar Siberian mineral known as *górni kózha*, or "mineral leather."[1] The irritated *isprávnik*, who felt that he had been made to appear like an ignorant fool in the eyes of the Irkútsk scientists, sent for the peasant and said to him angrily, "You stupid blockhead! Did n't you tell me that you had actually eaten some of this stuff? It is n't a mammoth at all; it 's a mineral — a thing that they take out of mines."

"I did eat it, Bárin," maintained the peasant stoutly; "but," he added, with a sheepish, self-excusatory air, "what can't you eat with butter?"

As the servant in Maimáchin brought round and handed to us successively black mushrooms, crawfish tails, tree-lichens, and seaweed, I thought of the peasant's mammoth, and said to myself, "What can't one eat with vinegar and Chinese brandy?"

After the last of the cold victuals had been served and disposed of, the dishes were cleared away, the saucers were

[1] One of the asbestic forms of hornblende. It contains iron, aluminium, calcium, magnesium, manganese, sodium, and potassium combined with silicon.

replenished with vinegar, and the hot courses came on as follows:

1. Meat dumplings, consisting of finely minced veal inclosed in a covering of dough and boiled.

Mr. Frost, by some occult process of divination, discovered, or thought he discovered, that the essential component of these dumplings was young dog, and he firmly refused to have anything whatever to do with them even in combination with vinegar. I reproached him for this timidity, and assured him that such unfounded prejudices were unworthy the character of a man who professed to be a traveler and an investigator, and a man, moreover, who had already spent three years in the Russian Empire. Had I known, however, what was yet to come, I think I should have held my peace.

2. Finely minced meat pressed into small balls and fried.

3. Small meat pies, or *pâtés*.

4. Boiled fowl, served in a thick whitish gravy with large snails.

At this course I felt compelled to draw the line. The snails had turned black in the process of cooking, and resembled nothing so much as large boiled tomato-vine worms; and although I drank two cupfuls of hot rice-brandy with the hope of stimulating my resolution up to the point of tasting them, my imagination took the bit between its teeth and ran away with my reason.

5. Fat of some kind in soft, whitish, translucent lumps.

6. Roast sucking pig, served whole.

This was perhaps the most satisfactory course of the whole dinner, and as I ate it I thought of Charles Lamb's well-known essay describing the manner in which the Chinese discovered the great art of roasting young pig, and decided that I, too, would burn down a house if necessary in order to obtain it.

7. Small pieces of mutton spitted on long, slender iron needles and roasted over a hot fire.

8. Chicken in long, thin, shredded fibers, served with the broth.

9. Boiled rice.

10. Peculiar hard, woody mushrooms, or lichens, boiled and served with brown gravy.

11. Thin, translucent, and very slippery macaroni, cooked in a Chinese *samovár*.

12. Cocks' heads with sections of the necks; and finally,

13 to 19. Different kinds of soups served simultaneously.

The soups virtually brought the dinner to an end. The table was again cleared, the vinegar-saucers and *sáki*-cups were removed, and the servants brought in successively nuts and sweetmeats of various sorts, delicious "flower tea," and French champagne.

The dinner occupied about three hours, and within that time every guest partook of thirty or forty courses, consumed from one to three saucersful of Chinese vinegar, drank from fifteen to twenty-five *sáki*-cupfuls of hot rice-brandy flavored with rose, and washed down the last mouthfuls of Chinese confectionery with bumpers of champagne to the health of our host.

That we were able to get to our *dróshkies* without assistance, and did not all die of acute indigestion before the next morning, must be regarded as a piece of good luck so extraordinary as to be almost miraculous. My curiosity with regard to a Chinese dinner was completely satisfied. If the Chinese dine in this way every day I wonder that the race has not long since become extinct. One such dinner, eaten late in the fall, would enable a man, I should think, if he survived it, to go into a cave like a bear and hibernate until the next spring.

I little thought when I drove away from the Chinese merchant's counting-house in Maimáchin late that afternoon that I had enjoyed the last recreation I should know for months to come, and that I was looking at the old Mongolian town for the last time. Early Sunday morning

I was taken sick with a violent chill, followed by high fever, severe headache, pain in the back, cough, languor, and great prostration. It was the beginning of a serious illness, which lasted nearly two weeks and from which I did not fully recover for three months. With that sickness began the really hard and trying part of my Siberian experience. Up to that time I had had at least strength to bear the inevitable hardships of life and travel in such a country; but after that time I was sustained chiefly by will power, quinine, and excitement. It is unnecessary to describe the miseries of sickness in such a place as that wretched room adjoining Klembótski's bakery in the frontier town of Tróitskosávsk. There are no entries in my note-book to cover that unhappy period of my Siberian life; but in a letter that I managed to write home from there I find my circumstances briefly described in these words: "It is one thing to be sick at home in a good bed, in clean linen, and with somebody to take care of you; but it is quite another thing to lie down sick like a dog on a hard plank floor, with all your clothes on, and in the paroxysms of fever be tormented to the verge of frenzy by bedbugs." I had no bedding except my sheepskin overcoat and a dirty blanket, and although I tried the hard bedstead, the floor, and the table by turns, I could not anywhere escape the fleas and the bedbugs. I tried at first to treat my illness myself with a small case of medicines that I had brought with me; but learning that there was a Russian physician in the town, I finally sent for him. He began giving me ten-grain doses of quinine, which ultimately broke the fever, and at the end of twelve days, although still very weak, I was able to be up and to walk about.

I fully realized for the first time while lying sick in Klembótski's bakery what a political exile must suffer when taken sick in a roadside *étape*. In addition, however, to all that I had to endure, the exile must live upon coarse food, breathe air that is more or less foul or infected, and per-

haps lie in leg-fetters upon a hard plank sleeping-bench. Mr. Charúshin, a political convict whose acquaintance I made in Nérchinsk, was not released from his leg-fetters even when prostrated by typhus fever.

MAP OF ROUTE FROM TRÓITSKOSÁVSK TO KARÁ.

On the 15th of October Mr. Frost and I left Tróitskosávsk for Selengínsk. I felt very weak and dizzy that morning, and feared that I was about to have a relapse; but I thought that even a jolting *teléga* in the open air could hardly be a worse place in which to be sick than the vermin-infested room that I had so long occupied, and I determined that if I had strength enough to walk out to a vehicle I would make a start. We rode about sixty miles that day, spent the night in the post-station of Povorótnaya, and reached Selengínsk early the next forenoon. In this wretched little Buriát village there were three interesting political exiles whom I desired to see, and we stopped there

for one day for the purpose of making their acquaintance. Their names were Constantine Shamárin, a young student from Ekaterínburg; Mr. Kardashóf, a Georgian from the Caucasus; and Madame Breshkófskaya, a highly educated young married lady from the city of Kiev. Mr. Kardashóf and Madame Breshkófskaya had both served out penal terms at the mines of Kará, and I thought that I could perhaps obtain from them some useful information with regard to the best way of getting to those mines, and the character of the officials with whom I should there have to deal.

Mr. Shamárin, upon whom I called first, was a pleasant-faced young fellow, twenty-four or twenty-five years of age, of middle height and quiet, gentlemanly bearing, with honest, trustworthy, friendly eyes that inspired confidence as soon as one looked at him. His history seemed to me to furnish a very instructive illustration of the complete disregard of personal rights that characterizes the Russian Government in its dealings with citizens who happen to be suspected, with or without reason, of political untrustworthiness. While still a university student he was arrested upon a political charge, and after being held for three years in one of the bomb-proof casemates of the Trubetskói bastion in the fortress of Petropávlovsk was finally tried by a court. The evidence against him was so insignificant that the court contented itself with sentencing him to two months' imprisonment. Holding a man in solitary confinement for three years in a bomb-proof casement before trial, and then sentencing him to so trivial a punishment as two months' imprisonment, is in itself a remarkable proceeding, but I will let that pass without comment. Mr. Shamárin certainly had the right, at the expiration of the two months, to be set at liberty, inasmuch as he had borne the penalty inflicted upon him by virtue of a judicial sentence pronounced after due investigation and trial. The Government, however, instead of liberating him, banished him by

administrative process to a village called Barguzín in the territory of the Trans-Baikál, more than four thousand miles east of St. Petersburg. In the summer of 1881 he, with three other politicals, including Madame Breshkófskaya, made an unsuccessful attempt to escape across the Trans-Baikál to the Pacific Ocean with the hope of there getting on board an American vessel. For this he was sent to a native *ulús* in the sub-arctic province of Yakútsk, where he was seen by some or all of the members of the American expedition sent to the relief of the survivors of the arctic exploring steamer *Jeannette*. In 1882 or 1883 he was transferred to Selengínsk, and in the autumn of 1884 his term of exile expired, leaving him in an East-Siberian village three thousand miles from home without any means of getting back. The Government does not return to their homes the political exiles whom it has sent to Siberia, unless such exiles are willing to travel by *étape*, with a returning criminal party. Owing to the fact that parties going towards Russia do not make as close connections with the armed convoys at the *étapes* as do parties coming away from Russia, their progress is very slow. Colonel Zagárin, the inspector of exile transportation for Eastern Siberia, told me that returning parties are about three hundred days in making the thousand-mile stretch between Irkútsk and Tomsk. Very few political exiles are willing to live a year in fever-infected and vermin-infested *étapes* even for the sake of getting back to European Russia; and unless they can earn money enough to defray the expenses of such a journey, or have relatives who are able to send them the necessary money, they remain in Siberia. I helped one such political to get home by buying, for a hundred *rúbles*, a collection of Siberian flowers that he had made, and I should have been glad to help Mr. Shamárin; but he had been at work for more than a year upon an index to the public documents in the archives of the old town of Selengínsk, extending over a period of a hundred and thirty years, and he hoped that the

governor would pay him enough for this labor to enable him to return to European Russia at his own expense. The correspondence of the political exiles in Selengínsk is under police control; that is, all their letters are read and subjected to censorship by the *isprávnik*. When Mr. Shamárin's term of exile expired he was, of course, *de jure* and *de facto* a free man. He sent a petition to the governor of the province asking that the restrictions upon his correspondence be removed. The governor referred the matter to the *isprávnik*, and the *isprávnik* declined to remove them. Therefore, for more than a year after Mr. Shamárin's term of banishment had expired, and after he had legally reacquired all the rights of a free citizen, he could receive and send letters only after they had been read and approved by the police. How exasperating this cool, cynical, almost contemptuous disregard of personal rights must be to a high-spirited man the reader can perhaps imagine if he will suppose the case to be his own.

While Mr. Shamárin and I were talking, Madame Breshkófskaya came into the room and I was introduced to her. She was a lady perhaps thirty-five years of age, with a strong, intelligent, but not handsome face, a frank, unreserved manner, and sympathies that seemed to be warm, impulsive, and generous. Her face bore traces of much suffering, and her thick, dark, wavy hair, which had been cut short in prison at the mines, was streaked here and there with gray; but neither hardship, nor exile, nor penal servitude had been able to break her brave, finely tempered spirit, or to shake her convictions of honor and duty. She was, as I soon discovered, a woman of much cultivation, having been educated first in the women's schools of her own country, and then at Zurich in Switzerland. She spoke French, German, and English, was a fine musician, and impressed me as being in every way an attractive and interesting woman. She had twice been sent to the mines of Karà — the second time for an attempt to escape from

forced colonization in the Trans-Baikál village of Barguzín —and after serving out her second penal term had again been sent as a forced colonist to this wretched, God-forsaken Buriát settlement of Selengínsk, where she was under the direct supervision and control of the interesting chief of police who on the occasion of our first visit accompanied us to the Buddhist lamasery of Goose Lake. There was not another educated woman, so far as I know, within a hundred miles in any direction; she received from the Government an allowance of a dollar and a quarter a week for her support; her correspondence was under police control; she was separated for life from her family and friends; and she had, it seemed to me, absolutely nothing to look forward to except a few years, more or less, of hardship and privation, and at last burial in a lonely graveyard beside the Selengá River, where no sympathetic eye might ever rest upon the unpainted wooden cross that would briefly chronicle her life and death. The unshaken courage with which this unfortunate woman contemplated her dreary future, and the faith that she manifested in the ultimate triumph of liberty in her native country, were as touching as they were heroic. Almost the last words that she said to me were: "Mr. Kennan, we may die in exile, and our children may die in exile, and our children's children may die in exile, but something will come of it at last." I have never seen nor heard of Madame Breshkófskaya since that day. She has passed as completely out of my life as if she had died when I bade her good-by; but I cannot recall her last words to me without feeling conscious that all my standards of courage, of fortitude, and of heroic self-sacrifice have been raised for all time, and raised by the hand of a woman. Interviews with such political exiles —and I met many in the Trans-Baikál — were to me a more bracing tonic than medicine. I might be sick and weak, I might feel that we were having a hard life, but such examples of suffering nobly borne for the sake of a

principle, and for an oppressed people, would have put a soul under the ribs of death.

We left Selengínsk at four o'clock on the afternoon of Friday, October 16th, and after a ride of a hundred and eight miles, which we made in less than twenty-four hours, reached the district town of Vérkhni Údinsk. The weather, particularly at night, was cold and raw, and the jolting of the springless post-vehicles was rather trying to one who had not yet rallied from the weakness and prostration of fever; but the fresh open air was full of invigoration, and I felt no worse, at least, than at the time of our departure from Tróitskosávsk, although we had made in two days and nights a distance of a hundred and seventy miles. There were two prisons in Vérkhni Údinsk that I desired to inspect; and as early as possible Sunday morning I called upon the *isprávnik*, introduced myself as an American traveler, exhibited my open letters, and succeeded in making an engagement with that official to meet him at the old prison about noon.

The *ostróg* of Vérkhni Údinsk, which serves at the same time as a local prison, a forwarding prison, and a place of temporary detention for persons awaiting trial, is an old weather-beaten, decaying log building situated on the high right bank of the Selengá River, about a mile below the town. It does not differ essentially from a log *étape* of the old Siberian type, except in being a little higher from foundation to roof, and in having a sort of gallery in every *kámera*, or cell, so arranged as to serve the purpose of a second story. This gallery, which was reached by a steep flight of steps, seemed to me to have been put in as an afterthought in order to increase the amount of floor space available for *nári*, or sleeping-platforms. The prison had evidently been put in as good order as possible for our inspection; half the prisoners were out in the courtyard, the doors and windows of nearly all the *kámeras* had been thrown open to admit the fresh air, and the floors of the corridors and cells

did not seem to me to be disgracefully dirty. The prison was originally built to accommodate 170 prisoners. At the time of our visit it contained 250, and the *isprávnik* admitted, in reply to my questions, that in the late fall and winter it frequently held 700. The prisoners were then compelled to lie huddled together on the floors, under the low sleeping-platforms, in the corridors, and even out in the courtyard. What the condition of things would be when 700 poor wretches were locked up for the night in an air space intended for 170, and in winter, when the windows could not be opened without freezing to death all who were forced to lie near them, I could partly imagine. The prison at such times must be a perfect hell of misery.

Mr. M. I. Orfánof, a well-known Russian officer, who inspected this *ostróg* at intervals for a number of years previous to our visit, has described it as follows in a book published at Moscow under all the limitations of the censorship:

The first *ostróg* in the Trans-Baikál is that of Vérkhni Údinsk. It stands on the outskirts of the town, on the steep, high bank of the Selengá River. Over the edge of this bank, distant only five or six fathoms from the *ostróg*, are thrown all the prison filth and refuse, so that the first thing that you notice as you approach it at any time except in winter is an intolerable stench. The prison itself is an extremely old two-story log building intended to accommodate *140 prisoners*.[1] During my stay in Siberia I had occasion to visit it frequently. I never saw it when it held *less than 500*, and at times there were packed into it *more than 800*.[2] I remember very well a visit that I once made to it with the governor of the Trans-Baikál. He arrived in winter and went to the prison early in the morning, so that the outer door of the corridor was opened [for the first time that day] in his presence. The stench that met him was so great that, in spite of his desire to conceal from the prisoners his recognition of the fact that their accommodations were worse than those provided for dogs, he could not at once enter the building. He ordered the opposite door to be thrown open, and did not himself enter until a strong wind had been blowing for some

[1] The *isprávnik* told me 170. The lesser number is probably nearer the truth.
[2] The italics are Mr. Orfánof's own.

time through the prison. The first thing that he saw in one corner of the corridor was an overflowing *parásha*,[1] and through the ceiling was dripping filth from a similar *parásha* in the story above. In that corner of the corridor he found six men lying on the floor asleep. He was simply astounded. "How can people sleep," he exclaimed, "on this wet, foul floor and under such insupportable conditions?" He shouted indignantly at the warden and the other prison authorities, but he could change nothing.

It has been argued by some of my critics that I exaggerate the bad condition of Siberian prisons and *étapes;* but I think I have said nothing worse than the words that I have above quoted from a book written by an officer in the service of the Russian Government and published at Moscow in 1883 under all the limitations and restrictions of the censorship.[2]

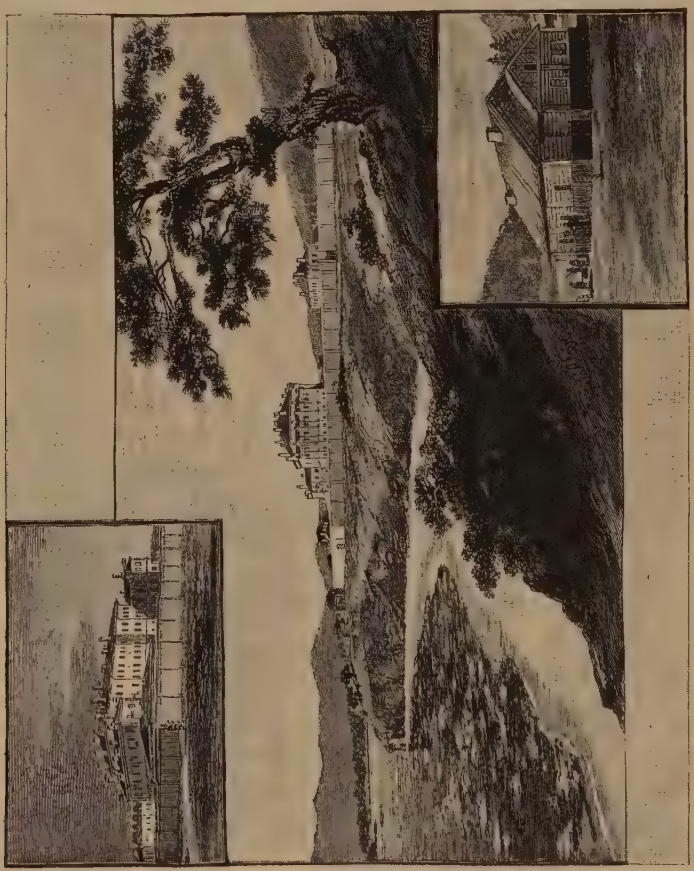
Through this prison of Vérkhni Údinsk pass every year educated and refined men and women sent to the Trans-Baikál for political offenses, and through it Madame Breshkófskaya passed four times on her way to and from the mines of Karà. I am glad, however, to be able to say that the old *ostróg* at Vérkhni Údinsk will soon become, if it has not already become, a thing of the past. A large new forwarding prison had just been finished at the time of our arrival, and it was to be opened, the *isprávnik* said, as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made for the larger guard that it would require.

As soon as we had finished our inspection of the old *ostróg*, we went with the *isprávnik* to see the new prison that was intended to take its place. It was a large four-story structure of brick, stuccoed and painted white, with two spacious wings, a large courtyard, and a separate building for the accommodation of political prisoners and the prison guard. The *kámeras* were all large, well lighted, and well ventilated, and every one of them above the base-

[1] This is the name given by Russian prisoners to the excrement tub.

[2] *V' Dalí* (Afar), by M. I. Orfánof, pp. 220-222. Moscow: 1883.

ment story had an extensive outlook over the surrounding country through at least three large windows. The corridors were twelve or fifteen feet wide; the stairways were of stone with iron balustrades; the solitary-confinement cells



TWO VIEWS OF THE NEW VÉRKHNI ÚDINSK PRISON. A TRANS-BAIKÁL ÉTAPE.

were as spacious as an ordinary American hall-bedroom; the arrangements for heating, ventilation, and cleanliness seemed to me to be as nearly perfect as they could be made; and as a whole the prison impressed me as being the very best I had seen in Russia, and one of the best I had ever seen in any country. Its cost was about 200,000 *rúbles* ($100,000), and it was intended to accommodate 440

prisoners. I expressed my satisfaction to the *isprávnik*, and said that I had not seen so good a prison in the Empire.

"Yes," he replied; "if they do not overcrowd it, it will be very comfortable. But if we have to shut up 700 prisoners in the old prison we shall probably be expected to put 3000 into this one, and then the state of things will be almost as bad as ever." Whether the *isprávnik*'s fears have been justified by events, I do not know; but the fact remains that the new prison at Vérkhni Údinsk is far and away the best building of its kind that we saw in the Empire except at St. Petersburg, and we were more than gratified to see at last some tangible evidence that the Russian Government does not regard the sufferings of its exiled criminals with absolute indifference.

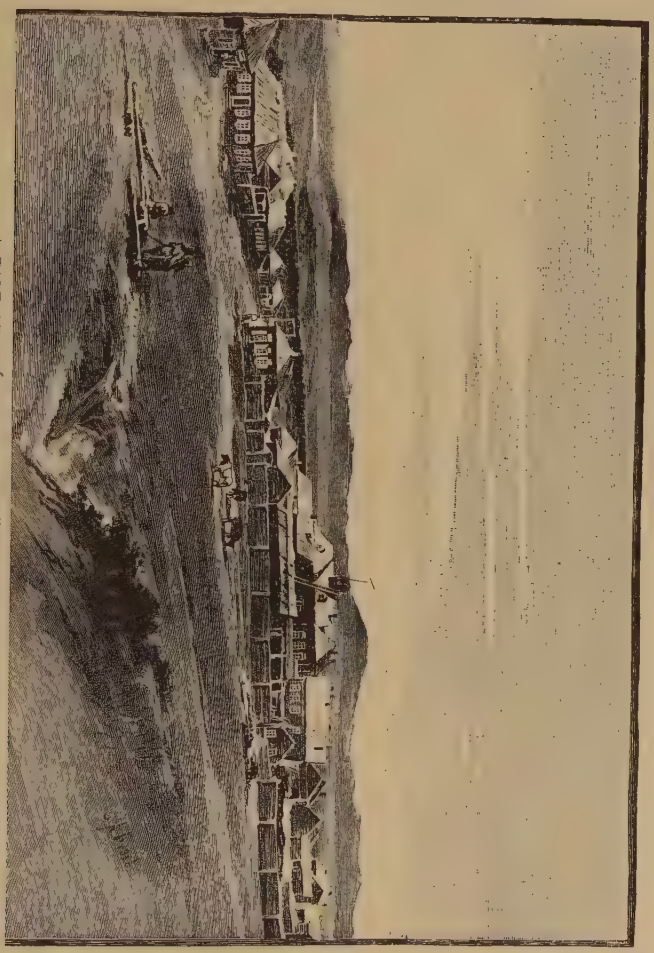
We left Vérkhni Údinsk on Monday, October 19th, for a ride about three hundred miles to the town of Chíta, which is the capital of the Trans-Baikál. The weather was more wintry than any that we had yet experienced; but no snow had fallen, the sky was generally clear, and we did not suffer much from cold except at night. At first the road ran up the shallow, barren, uninteresting valley of the Úda River, between nearly parallel ranges of low mountains, and presented, so far as we could see, little that was interesting. The leaves had all fallen from the trees; the flowers, with the exception of here and there a frost-bitten dandelion, had entirely disappeared; and winter was evidently close at hand. We traveled night and day without rest, stopping only now and then to visit a Buddhist lamasery by the roadside or to inspect an *étape*. The Government has recently expended three or four hundred thousand *rúbles* ($150,000 to $200,000) in the erection of a line of new *étapes* through the Trans-Baikál. These buildings, the general appearance of which is shown in one of the three combined illustrations on page 126, are rather small and are not well spoken of by the officers of the exile adminis-

tration; but they seemed to us to be a great improvement upon the *étapes* between Tomsk and Irkútsk.

On Thursday, October 22d, about fifty miles from Chíta we crossed a high mountainous ridge near the post-station of Domnokluchéfskaya, and rode down its eastern slope to one of the tributaries of the great river Amúr. We had crossed the watershed that divides the river systems of the arctic ocean from the river systems of the Pacific, and from that time America began to seem nearer to us across the Pacific than across Siberia. American goods of all kinds, brought from California, suddenly made their appearance in the village shops; and as I saw the American tin-ware, lanterns, and "Yankee notions," and read the English labels on the cans of preserved peaches and tomatoes, it seemed to me as if in the immediate future we ought from some high hill to catch sight of San Francisco and the Golden Gate. A few kerosene lamps and a shelf full of canned fruits and vegetables brought us in imagination five thousand miles nearer home.

About noon we arrived cold, tired, and hungry at the Trans-Baikál town of Chíta, and took up our quarters in a hotel kept by a Polish exile and known as the "Hotel Peterburg." Chíta, which is the capital of the Trans-Baikál and the residence of the governor, is a large, straggling, provincial town of about four thousand inhabitants, and, as will be seen from the illustration on page 129, does not differ essentially from other Siberian towns of its class. It has a public library, a large building used occasionally as a theater, and fairly good schools; politically and socially it is perhaps the most important place in the territory of which it is the capital. Its chief interest for us, however, lay in the fact that it is a famous town in the history of the exile system. To Chíta were banished, between 1825 and 1828, most of the gallant young noblemen who vainly endeavored to overthrow the Russian autocracy and to establish a constitutional form of government at the accession to

the throne of the Emperor Nicholas in December, 1825. Two of the log houses in which these so-called Decembrist exiles lived are still standing, and one of them is now occu-



A PART OF CHÍTA FROM THE "HOTEL PETERBURG."

pied as a carpenter's shop, and serves as a general rendezvous for later politicals who followed the example set by the Decembrists and met the same fate.

The colony of exiles in Chíta at the time of our visit comprised some of the most interesting men and women whom we met in the Trans-Baikál. We brought letters of

introduction to them from many of their comrades in other parts of Siberia, were received by them with warm-hearted hospitality and perfect trust, and spent with them many long winter evenings in the upper room of the old Decembrist house, talking of the Russian revolutionary movement, of the fortress of Petropávlovsk, of the Kharkóf central prison, and of the mines of Karáa.

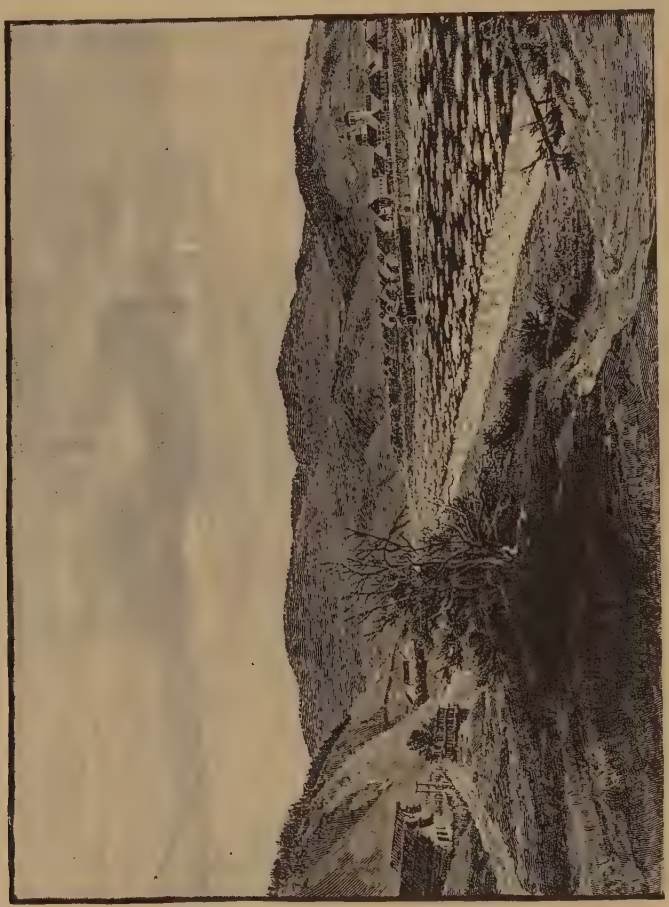
Owing to the absence of the governor of the territory, we could not obtain in Chíta permission to visit and inspect the Karáa prisons and mines; but the governor's chief of staff, upon whom I called, did not seem to have any objection to our going there and making the attempt. He said he would telegraph the commanding officer about us, and gave me one of his visiting-cards as a substitute for a letter of introduction. It did not seem to me likely that a simple visiting-card, without even so much as a penciled line, would unlock the doors of the dread Karáa prisons; but it was all that we could get, and on the 24th of October we set out for our remaining ride of three hundred miles to the mines.

CHAPTER V

THE CONVICT MINES OF KARÁ

THE mines of Karà are distant from Chíta, the capital of the Trans-Baikál, about 300 miles; but for more than 200 miles the traveler in approaching them follows a fairly good post-road, which runs at first through the valley of the Ingodá and then along the northern or left bank of the Shílka River, one of the principal tributaries of the Amúr. At a small town called Strétinsk, where the Shílka first becomes navigable, this post-road abruptly ends, and beyond that point communication with the Karà penal settlements is maintained by boats in summer and by sledges drawn over the ice in winter. For two or three weeks in autumn, while the ice is forming, and for a somewhat shorter period in the spring, after the river breaks up, the Karà mines are virtually isolated from all the rest of the world, and can be reached only by a difficult and dangerous bridle path, which runs for a distance of seventy or eighty miles, parallel with the river, across a series of steep and generally forest-clad mountain ridges. We hoped to reach Strétinsk in time to descend the Shílka to the Karà River in a boat; and when we left Chíta, on Saturday, October 24th, there seemed to be every probability that we should succeed in so doing. The weather, however, turned suddenly colder; snow fell to a depth of an inch and a half or two inches; and Wednesday morning, when we alighted from our *teléga* on the northern bank of the Shílka opposite Strétinsk, winter had set in with great

severity. The mercury in our thermometer indicated zero (Fahr.); our fur coats and the bodies of our horses were white with frost; and the broad, rapid current of the Shílka was so choked with masses of heavy ice as to be



THE SHÍLKA RIVER AND THE TOWN OF STRÉTINSK.

almost, if not quite, impassable. A large open skiff was making a perilous attempt to cross from Strétinsk to our side of the river, and a dozen or more peasants, who stood shivering around a small camp-fire on the beach, were waiting for it, with the hope that it would come safely to land and that the ferrymen might be persuaded to make a

return trip with passengers. After watching for a quarter of an hour the struggles of this boat with the ice, Mr. Frost and I decided that it would be hazardous to attempt, in an open skiff, the passage of a rapid and ice-choked river half a mile wide, even if the boatman were willing to take us; and we therefore sought shelter in the small log house of a young Russian peasant named Záblikof, who good-humoredly consented to give us a night's lodging provided we had no objection to sleeping on the floor with the members of his family. We were too much exhausted and too nearly frozen to object to anything; and as for sleeping on the floor, we had become so accustomed to it that we should have felt out of place if we had tried to sleep anywhere else. We therefore had our baggage transported to Záblikof's house, and in half an hour were comfortably drinking tea in the first decently clean room we had seen since leaving Nérchinsk.

We devoted most of the remainder of the day to a discussion of our situation and of the possibility of reaching the Kará mines at that season of the year by an overland journey across the mountains.

Descending the river in a boat was manifestly impracticable on account of the great quantity of running ice; we could not waste two or three weeks in inaction, and the horseback ride to the mines over the mountains seemed to be the only feasible alternative. There were, on our side of the river, a few horses that Záblikof thought might be hired; but they belonged to a merchant who lived in Strétinsk, and in order to get permission to use them, as well as to obtain the necessary saddles and equipments and secure the services of a guide, it would be necessary to cross the Shílka to the town. This, in the existing condition of the river, was a somewhat perilous undertaking; but Záblikof offered to accompany me with two or three of his men, and early Thursday morning we carried his light, open skiff down to the beach for the purpose of making the attempt.

The weather had moderated a little, but it was still very cold; the river had become an almost continuous field of swiftly moving ice, intersected by narrow lanes of black open water; and a belt of fixed ice extended from the shore a distance of forty or fifty yards, becoming thinner and thinner as it approached the water's edge. Out over this treacherous surface we cautiously pushed our skiff, holding ourselves in readiness to spring into it quickly all together at the instant when the ice should give way under our feet. Four or five yards from the black, eddying current the ice yielded, we felt a sudden sinking sensation, and then, with a great confused crash, we went into the water, Záblikof shouting excitedly, "Now! Into the boat!" The skiff gave a deep roll, first to one side and then to the other, as we all sprang into it; but fortunately it did not capsize, and in another moment we were whirled away and swept rapidly down-stream amid huge grinding ice-tables, which we fended off, as well as we could, with oars and boat-hooks. As soon as the first excitement of the launch was over, two of the men settled down to steady rowing, while Záblikof, boat-hook in hand, stood in the bow as pilot, and guided our frail craft through the narrow lanes of water between the swiftly running ice-floes. We were carried down-stream about half a mile before we could reach the opposite shore, and when we did reach it the making of a landing on the thin, treacherous edge of the fast ice proved to be a more difficult and dangerous task than even the launching of the skiff. Three or four times while we were clinging with boat-hooks to the crumbling edge of the ice-foot I thought we should certainly be crushed or capsized by the huge white fields and tables that came grinding down upon us from above; but we finally broke our way into the stationary ice-belt far enough to get shelter. Záblikof sprang out upon a hummock and made fast a line, and after being immersed in the freezing water up to my hips as the result of an awkward jump, I gained a footing

upon ice that was firm enough to sustain my weight. The weather was so cold that getting wet was a serious matter; and leaving Záblikof and the men to pull out the boat, I started at a brisk run for the town and took refuge in the first shop I could find. After drying and warming myself I sent a telegram to Mr. Wurts, the Secretary of the United States Legation in St. Petersburg, to apprise him of our whereabouts; found the owner of the horses and made a bargain with him for transportation to the first peasant village down the river in the direction of the mines; hired an old guide named Nikífer; procured the necessary saddles and equipments, and late in the afternoon made, without accident, the perilous return trip across the river to Záblikof's house.

As early as possible on Friday we saddled our horses and set out for the mines, taking with us nothing except our blanket rolls and note-books, a bag of provisions, the camera, and about a dozen dry plates. The weather had again moderated and our thermometer indicated a temperature of eighteen degrees above zero; but the sky was dark and threatening, a light snow was falling, and as we rode up on the summit of the first high ridge and looked ahead into the wild, lonely mountainous region that we were to traverse, I felt a momentary sinking of the heart. I was still weak from my sickness in Tróitskosávsk, winter had set in, and I feared that my slender stock of reserve strength would not carry me through a ride of eighty miles on horseback over such a trail as this was represented to be. Moreover, our winter equipment was scanty and not at all adapted to such a journey. Presuming that we should be able to descend the Shílka in a boat, we had not provided ourselves with fur sleeping-bags; our sheepskin overcoats were not long enough to protect our knees; we had not been able to obtain fur hoods; and our felt boots were so large and heavy that they would not go into our stirrups, and we were forced either to ride without them or to dis-

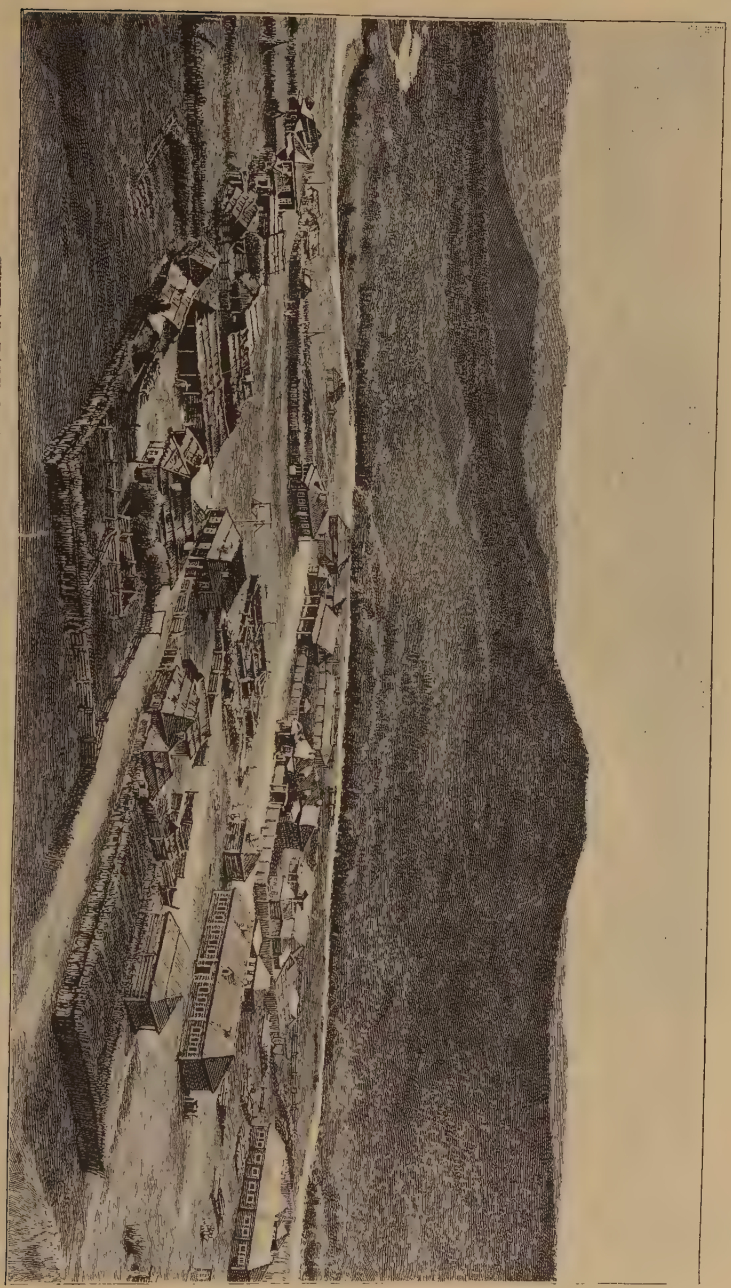
pense with the support that the stirrups might afford. Fortunately the trail that we followed was at first fairly good, the weather was not very cold, and we succeeded in making a distance of twenty miles without a great deal of suffering. We stopped for the night in the small log village called Lómi, on the bank of the Shílka, slept on the floor of a peasant's house, in the same room with two adults and five children, and Saturday morning, after a breakfast of tea, black bread, and cold fish-pie, resumed our journey, with fresh horses and a new guide. The weather had cleared off cold during the night, and our thermometer, when we climbed into our saddles, indicated a temperature of eight degrees below zero. The bodies of the horses were white and shaggy with frost, icicles hung from their nostrils, and they seemed as impatient to get away as we were. With our departure from Lómi began the really difficult part of our journey. The trail ran in a tortuous course across a wilderness of rugged mountains, sometimes making long detours to the northward to avoid deep or precipitous ravines; sometimes climbing in zigzags the steep sides of huge transverse ridges; and occasionally coming out upon narrow shelf-like cornices of rock, high above the dark, ice-laden waters of the Shílka, where a slip or stumble of our horses would unquestionably put an end to our Siberian investigations. That we did not meet with any accident in the course of this ride to Karâ seems to me a remarkable evidence of good luck. Our horses were unshod, and the trail in many places was covered with ice formed by the overflow and freezing of water from mountain springs, and then hidden by a thin sheet of snow, so that it was impossible to determine from the most careful inspection of a steep and dangerous descent whether or not it would afford secure foothold for our horses. Throughout Saturday and Sunday we walked most of the time; partly because we were too nearly frozen to sit in the saddle, and partly because we dared not take the risks of the slip-

pery trail. Three days of riding, walking, and climbing over rugged mountains, in a temperature that ranged from zero to ten degrees below, finally exhausted my last reserve of strength; and when we reached the peasant village of Shílkina at a late hour Sunday night, a weak and thready pulse, running at the rate of 120, warned me that I was near

LIVING-ROOM OF RUSSIAN PEASANT'S HOUSE AT UST KARÁ.

the extreme limit of my endurance. Fortunately the worst part of our journey was over. Ust Kará, the most southerly of the Kará penal settlements, was distant from Shílkina only ten or twelve miles; the trail between the two places presented no unusual difficulties; and about noon on Monday we dismounted from our tired horses in the large village at the mouth of the Kará River, hobbled with stiffened and benumbed legs into the house of a peasant known to our guide, and threw ourselves down to rest.

The mines of Karâ, which are the private property of his Imperial Majesty the Tsar, and are worked for his benefit, consist of a series of open gold placers, situated at irregular intervals along a small rapid stream called the Karâ River, which rises on the water-shed of the Yáblonoi mountains, runs in a southeasterly direction for a distance of forty or fifty miles, and finally empties into the Shílka between Strétinsk and the mouth of the Argún. The name "Karâ," derived from a Tatár adjective meaning "black," was originally used merely to designate this stream; but it is now applied more comprehensively to the whole chain of prisons, mines, and convict settlements that lie scattered through the Karâ valley. These prisons, mines, and convict settlements, taking them in serial order from south to north, are known separately and distinctively as Ust Karâ or Karâ mouth, the Lower Prison, the Political Prison, the Lower Diggings, Middle Karâ, Upper Karâ, and the Upper or Amúrski Prison. The administration of the whole penal establishment centers in the Lower Diggings, where the governor of the common-criminal prisons resides, and where there is a convict settlement of two or three hundred inhabitants and a company or two of soldiers in barracks. It seemed to me best to make this place our headquarters; partly because it was the residence of the governor, without whose consent we could do nothing, and partly because it was distant only about a mile from the political prison in which we were especially interested. We therefore left our horses and our guide at Ust Karâ with orders to wait for us, and after dining and resting for an hour or two, set out in a *teléga* for the Lower Diggings. The road ran up the left bank of the Karâ River through a shallow valley averaging about half a mile in width, bounded by low hills that were covered with a scanty second growth of young larches and pines, and whitened by a light fall of snow. The floor of the valley was formed by huge shapeless mounds of gravel and sand, long ago turned over and washed in the



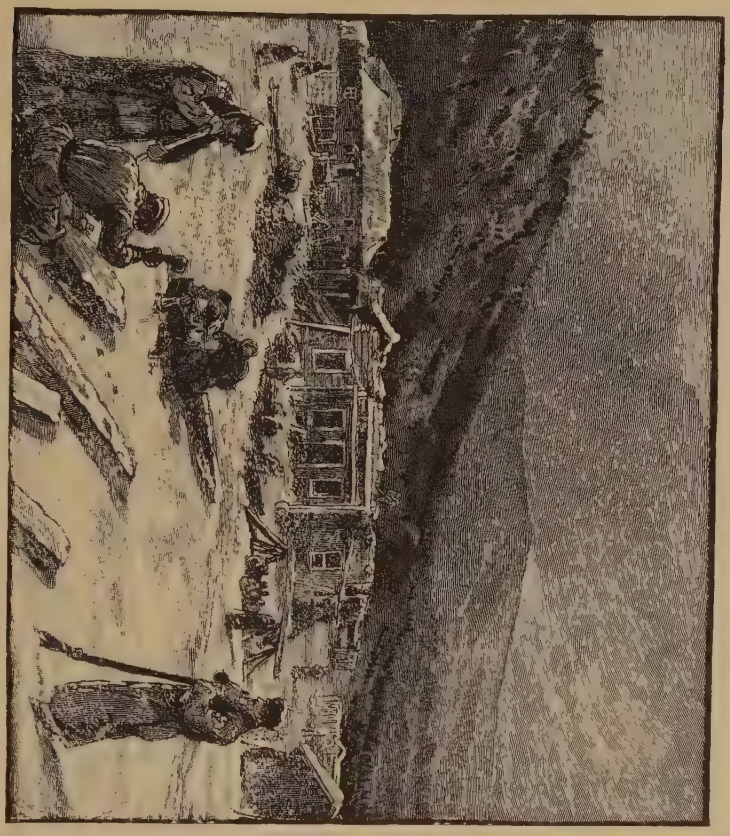
CENTRAL PART OF THE PENAL SETTLEMENT, KNOWN AS THE KARÁ LOWER DIGGINGS.

search for gold, and it suggested a worked-out placer in the most dreary and desolate part of the Black Hills.

We reached the settlement at the Lower Diggings just before dark. It proved to be a spacious but straggling Siberian village of low whitewashed cabins, long unpainted log barracks, officers' tin-roofed residences, with wattle-inclosed yards, and a black, gloomy, weather-beaten log prison of the usual East-Siberian type. The buildings belonging to the Government were set with some show of regularity in wide open spaces or along a few very broad streets; and they gave to the central part of the village a formal and official air that was strangely at variance with the disorderly arrangement of the unpainted shanties and dilapidated driftwood cabins of the ticket-of-leave convicts which were huddled together, here and there, on the outskirts of the settlement or along the road that led to Ust Kará. On one side of an open square, around which stood the prison and the barracks, forty or fifty convicts in long gray overcoats with yellow diamonds on their backs were at work upon a new log building, surrounded by a cordon of Cossacks in sheepskin *shúbas*, felt boots, and muff-shaped fur caps, who stood motionless at their posts, leaning upon their Berdan rifles and watching the prisoners. At a little distance was burning a camp-fire, over which was hanging a tea-kettle, and around which were standing or crouching a dozen more Cossacks, whose careless attitudes and stacked rifles showed that they were temporarily off duty. In the waning light of the cold, gloomy autumnal afternoon, the dreary snowy square, the gray group of convicts working listlessly as if hopeless or exhausted, and the cordon of Cossacks leaning upon their bayoneted rifles made up a picture that for some reason exerted upon me a chilling and depressing influence. It was our first glimpse of convict life at the mines.

We drove at once to the house of the governor of the prisons, for the purpose of inquiring where we could find shelter for the night. Major Pótulof, a tall, fine-looking,

soldierly man about fifty years of age, received us cordially, and said that he had been apprised of our coming by a telegram from the acting governor in Chíta; but he did not really expect us, because he knew the Shílka was no longer navigable, and he did not believe foreign travelers would



CONVICTS AT WORK UPON A NEW GOVERNMENT BUILDING AT THE LOWER DIGGINGS.

undertake, at that season of the year, the difficult and dangerous journey across the mountains. He expressed great pleasure, however, at seeing us, and invited us at once to accept the hospitalities of his house. I told him that we did not intend to quarter ourselves upon him, but merely wished to inquire where we could find shelter for the night. He laughed pleasantly, and replied that there were no

hotels or boarding-houses in Karâ except those provided by the Government for burglars, counterfeiters, and murderers; and that he expected us, of course, to accept his hospitality and make ourselves at home in his house. This was not at all in accordance with our wishes or plans. We had hoped to find some place of abode where we should not be constantly under official surveillance; and I did not see how we were secretly to make the acquaintance of the political convicts if we consented to become the guests of the governor of the prisons. As there did not, however, seem to be any alternative, we accepted Major Pótulof's invitation, and in ten minutes were comfortably quartered in a large, well-furnished house, where our eyes were gladdened by the sight of such unfamiliar luxuries as long mirrors, big soft rugs, easy-chairs, and a piano.

MAJOR PÓTULOF.

The Karâ prisons and penal settlements at the time of our visit contained, approximately, 1800 hard-labor convicts.[1] Of this number about one-half were actually in close

[1] According to the annual report of the Chief Prison Administration the number of convicts in the Karâ prisons and penal settlements on the 1st of January, 1886,— about two months after our visit,— was 2507. This number, however, included 600 or 800 women and children who had come to the mines voluntarily with their husbands and fathers. (See Report of the Chief Prison Administration for 1886, pp. 46, 47. St. Petersburg: Press of the Ministry of the Interior, 1888.)

confinement, while the remainder were living in barracks, or in little cabins of their own, outside the prison walls.

The penal term of a Russian convict at the mines is divided into two periods or stages. During the first of these periods he is officially regarded as "on probation," and is held in prison under strict guard. If his conduct is such as to merit the approval of the prison authorities, he is released from confinement at the end of his probationary term and is enrolled in a sort of ticket-of-leave organization known as the "free command." He is still a hard-labor convict; he receives his daily ration from the prison, and he cannot step outside the limits of the penal settlement without a permit; but he is allowed to live with other "reforming" criminals in convict barracks, or with his family in a separate house of his own; he can do extra work for himself in his leisure hours, if he feels so disposed, and he enjoys a certain amount of freedom. At the end of this second or "reforming" period he is sent as a "forced colonist" to some part of Eastern Siberia for the remainder of his life.

The prisons connected with the Kará penal establishment at the time of our visit were seven in number, and were scattered along the Kará River for a distance of about twenty miles. The slow but steady movement of the working convict force up-stream in the search for gold had left the Lower Diggings and Ust Kará prisons so far behind that their inmates could no longer walk in leg-fetters to and from the placers, and a large number of them were therefore living in enforced idleness. The direct supervision of the common-criminal prisons was intrusted to *smatrítels*, or wardens, who reported to Major Pótulof; and the prison buildings were guarded by detachments of Cossacks from the Kará battalion, which numbered about one thousand men. The two political prisons — one at the Lower Diggings for men, and the other at Ust Kará for women — were not under the control of Major Pótulof,

but were managed by a gendarme officer named Captain Nikólin, who had been sent out from St. Petersburg for this particular duty, and who was at the head of a carefully selected prison guard of 140 gendarmes. The political prisons had also their free command, which at the time of our visit consisted of twelve or fifteen men and women, who had finished their terms of probation and were living in little huts or cabins of their own on the outskirts of the Lower Diggings. All of these facts were known to us long before we reached the mines, and we shaped our course in accordance with them.

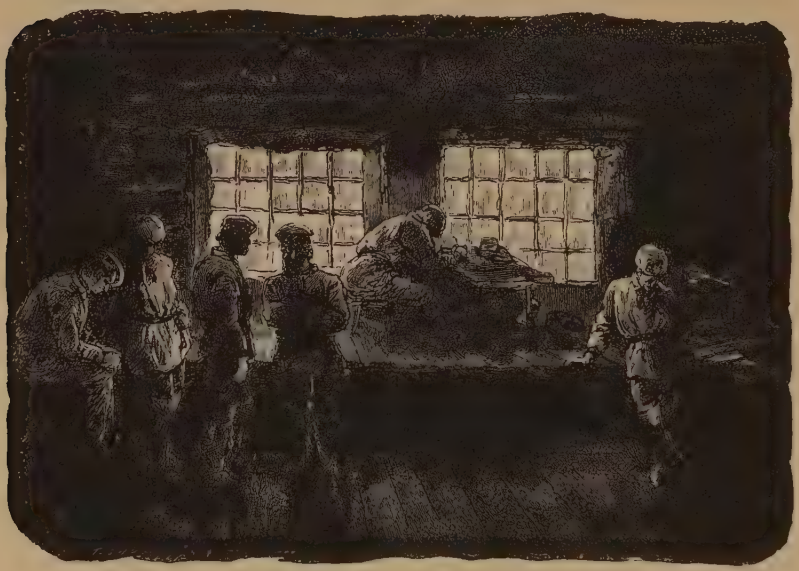
The objects that we had in view at Karáwere, first, to go through the common-criminal prisons and see the criminals actually at work in the mines; secondly, to make the acquaintance of the political convicts of the free command; and, thirdly, to visit the political prison and see how the condemned revolutionists lived, even if we were not permitted to talk with them. That we should succeed in attaining the first of these objects I felt confident, of the second I was not at all sure, and of the third I had little hope; but I determined to try hard for all. What instructions Major Pótulof had received with regard to us I did not know; but he treated us with great cordiality, asked no awkward questions, and when, on the day after our arrival, I asked permission to visit the prisons and mines, he granted it without the least apparent surprise or hesitation, ordered out his horses and *dróshky*, and said that it would give him great pleasure to accompany us.

It is not my purpose to describe minutely all of the prisons in Karáthat we were permitted to inspect, but I will sketch hastily the two that seemed to me to be typical, respectively, of the worst class and of the best.

The Ust Karáprison, which, in point of sanitary condition and overcrowding, is perhaps the worst place of confinement in the whole Karávalley, is situated on low, marshy ground in the outskirts of the penal settlement of the same

name, near the junction of the Kará River with the Shílka. It was built nearly half a century ago, when the Government first began to work the Kará gold placers with convict labor. As one approaches it from the south it looks like a long, low horse-car stable made of squared but unpainted logs, which are now black, weather-beaten, and decaying from age. Taken in connection with its inclosed yard it makes a nearly perfect square of about one hundred feet, two sides of which are formed by the prison buildings and two sides by a stockade about twenty-five feet in height, made of closely set logs, sharpened at the top like colossal lead-pencils. As we approached the courtyard gate, an armed Cossack, who stood in the black-barred sentry-box beside it, presented arms to Major Pótulof and shouted, "Stárshe!"—the usual call for the officer of the day. A Cossack corporal ran to the entrance with a bunch of keys in his hand, unlocked the huge padlock that secured the small door in the larger wooden gate, and admitted us to the prison courtyard. As we entered three or four convicts, with half-shaven heads, ran hastily across the yard to take their places in their cells for inspection. We ascended two or three steps incrusted with an indescribable coating of filth and ice an inch and a half thick, and entered, through a heavy plank door, a long, low, and very dark corridor, whose broken and decaying floor felt wet and slippery to the feet, and whose atmosphere, although warm, was very damp, and saturated with the strong peculiar odor that is characteristic of Siberian prisons. A person who has once inhaled that odor can never forget it; and yet it is so unlike any other bad smell in the world that I hardly know with what to compare it. I can ask you to imagine cellar air, every atom of which has been half a dozen times through human lungs and is heavy with carbonic acid; to imagine that air still further vitiated by foul, pungent, slightly ammoniacal exhalations from long unwashed human bodies; to imagine that it has a sugges-

tion of damp, decaying wood and more than a suggestion of human excrement—and still you will have no adequate idea of it. To unaccustomed senses it seems so saturated with foulness and disease as to be almost insupportable. As we entered the corridor, slipped upon the wet, filthy



A KÁMERA IN THE UST KARÁ PRISON.

floor, and caught the first breath of this air, Major Pótulof turned to me with a scowl of disgust, and exclaimed, "Atvratítelni tiurmá!" [It is a repulsive prison!]

The Cossack corporal who preceded us threw open the heavy wooden door of the first *kámera* and shouted, "Smírno!" [Be quiet!] the customary warning of the guard to the prisoners when an officer is about to enter the cell. We stepped across the threshold into a room about 24 feet long, 22 feet wide, and 8 feet high, which contained 29 convicts. The air here was so much worse than the air in the corridor that it made me faint and sick. The room was lighted by two nearly square, heavily grated windows with double sashes, that could not be raised or opened, and

there was not the least apparent provision anywhere for ventilation. Even the brick oven, by which the cell was warmed, drew its air from the corridor. The walls of the *kámera* were of squared logs and had once been white-washed; but they had become dark and grimy from lapse of time, and were blotched in hundreds of places with dull red blood-stains where the convicts had crushed bedbugs; the floor was made of heavy planks, and, although it had recently been swept, it was incrusted with dry, hard-trodden filth. Out from the walls on three sides of the room projected low, sloping wooden platforms about six feet wide, upon which the convicts slept, side by side, in closely packed rows, with their heads to the walls and their feet extended towards the middle of the cell. They had neither pillows nor blankets, and were compelled to lie down upon these sleeping-benches at night without removing their clothing, and without other covering than their coarse gray overcoats. The cell contained no furniture of any kind except these sleeping-platforms, the brick oven, and a large wooden tub. When the door was locked for the night each one of these 29 prisoners would have, for 8 or 10 hours' consumption, about as much air as would be contained in a packing-box 5 feet square and 5 feet high. If there was any way in which a single cubic foot of fresh air could get into that cell after the doors had been closed for the night I failed to discover it.

We remained in the first *kámera* only two or three minutes. I think I was the first to get out into the corridor, and I still vividly remember the sense of relief with which I drew a long breath of that corridor air. Heavy and vitiated as it had seemed to me when I first entered the prison, it was so much better than the atmosphere of the overcrowded cell that it gave me an impression of freshness and comparative purity. We then went through hastily, one after another, the seven *kámeras* that composed the prison. They all resembled the first one except that they

varied slightly in dimensions, in shape, or in the number of prisoners that they contained. In the cell shown in the illustration on page 146 I noticed a shoemaker's bench on the sleeping-platform between the windows, and the foulness of the air was tempered and disguised, to some extent, by the fresh odor of leather. Even in this *kámera*, however, I breathed as little as possible, and escaped into the corridor at the first opportunity. The results of breathing such air for long periods of time may be seen in the Kará prison hospital, where the prevalent diseases are scurvy, typhus and typhoid fevers, anæmia, and consumption. No one whom we met in Kará attempted to disguise the fact that most of these cases of disease are the direct result of the life that the convicts are forced to live in the dirty and overcrowded *kámeras*. The prison surgeon admitted this to me frankly, and said: "We have more or less scurvy here all the year round. You have been through the prisons, and must know what their sanitary condition is. Of course such uncleanliness and overcrowding result in disease. We have 140 patients in the hospital now; frequently in spring we have 250."[1]

Most of these cases come from a prison population of less than one thousand; and the hospital records do not, by any means, represent the aggregate of sickness in the Kará penal settlements. Many convicts of the free command lie ill in their own little huts or cabins, and even

[1] In 1857, when the famous, or infamous, Razgildéief undertook to get for the Tsar out of the Kará mines 100 *puds* (about 3600 pounds) of gold, more than 1000 convicts sickened and died in the Kará prisons from scurvy, typhus fever, and overwork. Alexander the Liberator was then Tsar, and it might be supposed that such awful misery and mortality in his own mines would inevitably attract his attention, and that he would devote at least a part of the gold bought with a thousand men's lives to the reformation of such a murderous penal system. Nothing, however, was done. Ten years passed, and at the expiration of that time, according to Maxímof, there were at the Kará mines "the same order of things, the same prisons, and the same scurvy." (See "Siberia and Penal Servitude," by S. Maxímof, Vol. I, p. 102. St. Petersburg: 1871.) Nearly twenty more years had elapsed when we visited the mines in 1885, and the report still was, "We have more or less scurvy here all the year round."

in the prison *kámeras* there are scores of sick whose cases are not regarded as serious enough to necessitate their removal to a hospital that is perhaps overcrowded already. A convict in the early stages of scurvy may therefore lie in a prison *kámera* for a week or two, poisoning with his foul, diseased breath the air that must be breathed by men who are still comparatively well.

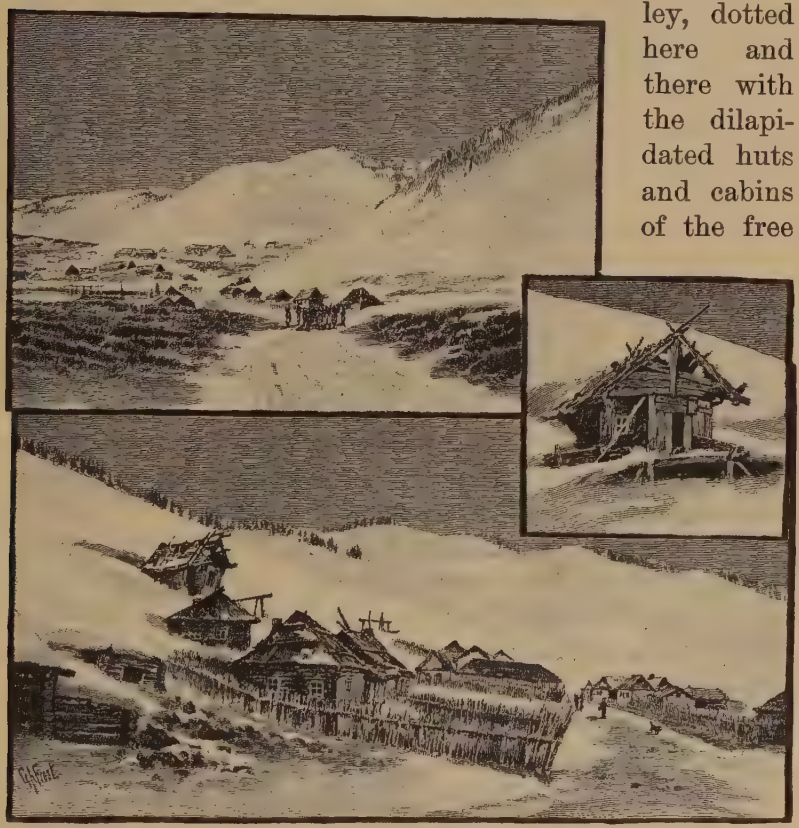
After visiting all the *kámeras* in the men's prison, we came out at last into the pure, cold, delicious air, crossed the courtyard, went through another gate in the stockade, and entered the women's prison — a similar but smaller log building, which contained two large cells opening into each other. These rooms were well warmed and lighted, were higher than the cells in the men's prison, and had more than twice as much air space per capita; but their sanitary condition was little, if any, better. The air in them had perhaps been less vitiated by repeated respiration, but it was so saturated with foul odors from a neglected water-closet that one's senses could barely tolerate it. The floor was uneven and decayed, and in places the rotten planks had either settled or given way entirely, leaving dark holes under which there was a vacant space between the floor and the swampy ground. Into these holes the women were evidently in the habit of throwing slops and garbage. I went and stood for a moment over one of them, but I could see nothing in the darkness beneath; and the damp air, laden with the effluvium of decaying organic matter that was rising from it, seemed to me so suggestive of typhoid fever and diphtheria that I did not venture to take a second breath in that vicinity. The *kámeras* in the women's prison had no furniture of any kind except the plank sleeping-platforms, which, of course, were entirely destitute of bedding. I did not see in either room a single pillow or blanket. In these two cells were imprisoned forty-eight girls and women, six or seven of whom were carrying in their arms pallid, sickly looking babies.

At every step in our walk through the two prisons Major Pótulof was besieged by unfortunate convicts who had complaints to make or petitions to present. One man had changed names with a comrade on the road while intoxicated, and had thus become a hard-labor convict when he should have been merely a forced colonist, and he wanted his case investigated. Another insisted that he had long since served out his full prison term and should be enrolled in the free command. Three more declared that they had been two months in prison and were still ignorant of the nature of the charges made against them. Many of the convicts addressed themselves eagerly to me, under the impression, apparently, that I must be an inspector sent to Kará to investigate the prison management. In order to save Major Pótulof from embarrassment and the complainants from possible punishment, I hastened to assure them that we had no power to redress grievances or to grant relief; that we were merely travelers visiting Kará out of curiosity. The complaints and the manifestly bad condition of the prisons seemed to irritate Major Pótulof, and he grew more and more silent, moody, and morose as we went through the *kámeras*. He did not attempt to explain, defend, or excuse anything, nor did he then, nor at any subsequent time, ask me what impression the Ust Kará prisons made upon me. He knew very well what impression they *must* make.

In another stockaded yard, adjoining the one through which we had passed, stood the political prison for women; but Major Pótulof could not take us into it without the permission of the gendarme commandant, Captain Nikólin. From all that I subsequently learned with regard to this place of punishment, I have little doubt that, while it is cleaner and less overcrowded than the common-criminal prisons, it does not rank much above the latter in comfort or in sanitary condition.

Early Tuesday afternoon we visited the Middle Kará

prison, which was perhaps the best one we inspected at the mines. It was distant from the Lower Diggings about three miles, and was reached by a road that ran up the right bank of the Kará River through a desolate, snowy valley, dotted here and there with the dilapidated huts and cabins of the free



VIEW NEAR UPPER KARÁ, AND HOUSES OF THE FREE COMMAND.

command. More wretched and cheerless places of abode than these can hardly be imagined. Readers who remember the so-called "shanties on the rocks" in the upper part of New York City can form, perhaps, with the aid of the illustration on this page, some faint idea of their appearance. The best of them could hardly bear comparison with the poorest of the Irish laborers' houses that

stand, here and there, along our railroads, while the worst of them were mere dog-kennels of driftwood and planks, in which it was almost incredible that human beings could exist throughout a Siberian winter.

The ostensible object of organizing a free command in connection with the Karâ prisons was to encourage reformation among the convicts by holding out to them, as a reward for good behavior, the hope of obtaining release from confinement and an opportunity to better their condition. It does not seem to me, however, that this object has been attained. The free command is a demoralizing rather than a reforming agency; it promotes rather than discourages drunkenness and licentiousness; it does not guarantee, even to criminals who are actually reforming, any permanent amelioration of condition; and every decade it is the means of turning loose upon the Siberian population three or four thousand common criminals of the worst class. The custom of allowing the wives and children of convicts to accompany them to Siberia, and to live — sometimes alone and unprotected — in the free command, results necessarily in great demoralization. Such wives and children are supported — or at least aided to exist — by the Government, with the hope that they will ultimately exert a beneficial domestic influence over their criminal husbands and fathers; but the results rarely justify official anticipations. The women and girls in a great majority of cases go to the bad in the penal settlements, even if they have come uncorrupted through two or three hundred overcrowded *étapes* and forwarding prisons. There is little inducement, moreover, for a convict in the free command to reform and establish himself with his family in a comfortable house of his own, because he knows that in a comparatively short time he will be sent away to some other part of Siberia as a "forced colonist," and will lose all the material results of his industry and self-denial. He generally tries, therefore, to get through his term in the free command with as little labor and as

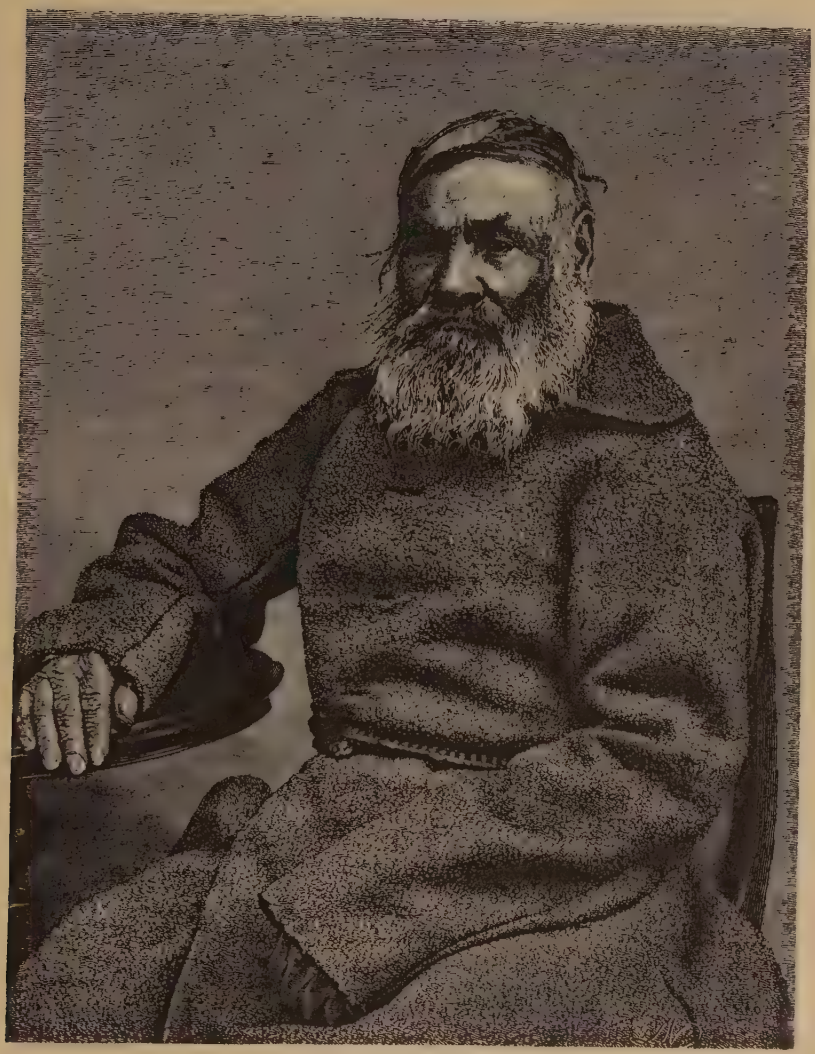
much vicious enjoyment as possible. Hundreds, if not thousands, of convicts look forward with eagerness to enrolment in the free command merely on account of the opportunities that it affords for escape. Every summer, when the weather becomes warm enough to make life out of doors endurable, the free command begins to overflow into the forests; and for two or three months a narrow but almost continuous stream of escaping convicts runs from the Kará penal settlements in the direction of Lake Baikál. The signal for this annual movement is given by the cuckoo, whose notes, when first heard in the valley of the Kará, announce the beginning of the warm season. The cry of the bird is taken as an evidence that an escaped convict can once more live in the forests; and to run away, in convict slang, is to "go to General Kukúshka for orders." [Kukúshka is the Russian name for the cuckoo.] More than 200 men leave the Kará free command every year to join the army of "General Kukúshka"; and in Siberia, as a whole, the number of runaway exiles and convicts who take the field in response to the summons of this popular officer exceeds 30,000. Most of the Kará convicts who "go to General Kukúshka for orders" in the early summer come back to the mines under new names and in leg-fetters the next winter; but they have had their outing, and have breathed for three whole months the fresh, free air of the woods, the mountains, and the steppes. With many convicts the love of wandering through the trackless forests and over the great plains of Eastern Siberia becomes a positive mania. They do not expect to escape altogether; they know that they must live for months the life of hunted fugitives, subsisting upon berries and roots, sleeping on the cold and often water-soaked ground, enduring hardships and miseries innumerable, and facing death at almost every step. But, in spite of all this, they cannot hear in early summer the first soft notes of the cuckoo without feeling an intense, passionate longing for the adventures and ex-

citements that attend the life of a *brodyág* [a vagrant or tramp].

"I had once a convict servant," said a prison official at Karâ to me, "who was one of these irreclaimable vagrants, and who ran away periodically for the mere pleasure of living a nomadic life. He always suffered terrible hardships; he had no hope of escaping from Siberia; and he was invariably brought back in leg-fetters, sooner or later, and severely punished; but nothing could break him of the practice. Finally, after he had become old and gray-headed, he came to me one morning in early summer—he was then living in the free command—and said to me, 'Bárin, I wish you would please have me locked up.' 'Locked up!' said I. 'What for? What have you been doing?' 'I have not been doing anything,' he replied, 'but you know I am a *brodyág*. I have run away many times, and if I am not locked up I shall run away again. I am old and gray-headed now, I can't stand life in the woods as I could once, and I don't want to run away; but if I hear General Kukúshka calling me I must go. Please do me the favor to lock me up, your High Nobility, so that I *can't* go.' I did lock him up," continued the officer, "and kept him in prison most of the summer. When he was released the fever of unrest had left him, and he was as quiet, contented, and docile as ever."

There seems to me something pathetic in this inability of the worn, broken old convict to hear the cry of the cuckoo without yielding to the enticement of the wild, free, adventurous life with which that cry had become associated. He knew that he was feeble and broken; he knew that he could no longer tramp through the forests, swim rapid rivers, subsist upon roots, and sleep on the ground, as he once had done; but when the cuckoo called he felt again the impulses of his youth, he lived again in imagination the life of independence and freedom that he had known only in the pathless woods, and he was dimly conscious

that if not prevented by force he "must go." As Ulysses had himself bound in order that he might not yield to the



OLD HARD-LABOR CONVICT.

voices of the sirens, so the poor old convict had himself committed to prison in order that he might not hear and obey the cry of the cuckoo, which was so intimately asso-

ciated with all that he had ever known of happiness and freedom.

It may seem to the reader strange that convicts are able to escape from penal settlements garrisoned and guarded by a force of a thousand Cossacks, but when one knows all the circumstances this ceases to be a matter for surprise. The houses of the ticket-of-leave convicts in the free command are not watched; there is no cordon of soldiers around the penal settlements; and it is comparatively an easy matter for a convict who is not under personal restraint to put into a gray bag a small quantity of food saved from his daily ration, tie a kettle to his belt, take an ax in his hand, and steal away at night into the trackless forest. It is a well-known fact, moreover, that many prison officials wink at escapes because they are able to turn them to pecuniary account. This they do by failing to report the runaways as "absent," by continuing to draw for weeks or months the clothing and the rations to which such runaways would be entitled if present, and by selling to the local representatives of Jewish speculators the food and garments thus acquired. Not infrequently these speculators have contracts to furnish prison supplies, and they fill them by reselling to the Government at a high price the very same flour and clothing that have just been stolen from it by its own officials. To an unscrupulous prison warden every dead or runaway convict is a source of steady revenue so long as his death or flight can be concealed and his name carried on the prison rolls. Under such circumstances, energetic measures to prevent the escape of criminals or to secure their recapture could hardly be expected.

The prison of Middle Karâ, which is situated in the penal settlement of the same name, is a one-story log building of medium size, placed in such a way that one of its longer sides stands flush with the line of the street, while the other is inclosed by a high stockade so as to form a nearly square yard. It did not seem to me to differ much in appearance

or plan from the prison at Ust Karà; but it was in better sanitary condition than the latter, and was evidently of more recent construction. As most of the prisoners that belonged there were at work in the upper gold placer when we arrived, I could not determine by inspection whether or not the building would be overcrowded at night. Major Pótulof told me, in reply to a question, that the number of criminals confined in it was 107. At the time of our visit, however, its *kámeras* contained only a few men, who had been excused from hard labor on account of temporary disability, or who had been assigned to domestic work, such as sweeping or cooking. The atmosphere of the *kámeras* was heavy and lifeless, but it seemed to be infinitely better than the air in the Ust Karà prison, and I could breathe it without much repugnance. By fastening against the walls over the sleeping-platforms large fresh boughs of hemlock and pine, an attempt had apparently been made to disguise the peculiar odor that is characteristic of Siberian prisons. Between these boughs in some of the *kámeras* I noticed, tacked against the logs, rectangular cards about twenty inches long by twelve inches wide, bearing in large printed letters verses from the New Testament. The only ones that I can now remember were: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," and "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Whence these scriptural cards came I do not know, but there seemed to me to be a strange and almost ghastly incongruity between the dark, grimy prison walls and the festal decorations of aromatic evergreens — between the rough plank sleeping-benches infested with vermin and the promise of rest for the weary and heavy-laden. How great a boon even bodily rest would be to the hard-labor convicts was shown in the pitiful attempts they had made to secure it by spreading down on the hard sleeping-benches thin patchwork mattresses improvised out of rags, cast-off foot-wrappers, and pieces cut from the skirts of their gray

overcoats. Not one of these mattresses contained less than twenty scraps and remnants of old cloth, while in some of them there must have been a hundred. They all looked like dirty "crazy-quilts" made out of paper-rags in a poor-house, and they could hardly have made any appreciable difference in the hardness of the plank sleeping-platforms. A man might as well seek to obtain a comfortable night's rest on a front door-step by interposing between it and his tired body a ragged and dirty bath-towel. There can be no reasonable excuse, it seems to me, for the failure of the Russian Government to provide at least beds and pillows of straw for its hard-labor convicts. Civilized human beings put straw even into the kennels of their dogs; but the Russian Government forces men to work for ten or twelve hours a day in its East-Siberian mines; compels them after this exhausting toil to lie down on a bare plank; and then, to console them in their misery, tacks up on the grimy wall over their heads the command and the promise of Christ, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Mr. Frost and I made a careful examination of ten prisons in the province of the Trans-Baikál, and in none of them — with the single exception of the new central prison in Vérkhni Údinsk — did we find a bed, a pillow, or a blanket. Everywhere the prisoners lay down at night in their gray overcoats on bare planks, and almost everywhere they were tortured by vermin, and were compelled to breathe the same air over and over again until it seemed to me that there could not be oxygen enough left in it to support combustion in the flame of a farthing rush-light. If any one who can read Russian thinks that these statements exaggerate the facts, I beg him to refer to the description of the convict prison at the Karà Lower Diggings in Maxímof's "Siberia and Penal Servitude," Vol. I, pages 100–103; to the description of the old Vérkhni Údinsk prison in Orfánof's "Afar," pages 220–222; and to the statements of the latter author

with regard to East-Siberian prisons and prison management generally in the second part of his book.[1] I am not saying these things for the first time; they have been said before, in Russia and by Russians. I do not repeat them because I like to do it; but because they *ought* to be repeated until the Russian Government shows some disposition to abate such evils.

After we had finished our inspection of the cells in the Middle Kará prison, we made an examination of the kitchen. Hard-labor convicts at Kará receive a daily ration consisting of three pounds of black rye-bread; about four ounces of meat, including the bone; a small quantity of barley, which is generally put into the water in which the meat is boiled for the purpose of making soup, and a little brick tea. Occasionally they have potatoes or a few leaves of cabbage; but such luxuries are bought with money made by extra work, or saved by petty "economies" in other ways. This ration seemed to me ample in quantity, but lacking in variety and very deficient in vegetables. The bread, which I tasted, was perhaps as good as that eaten by Russian peasants generally; but it was very moist and sticky, and pieces taken from the center of the loaf could be rolled back into dough in one's hands. The meat, which I saw weighed out to the convicts after it had been boiled and cut up into pieces about as large as dice, did not have an inviting appearance, and suggested to my mind small refuse scraps intended for use as soap-grease. The daily meals of the convicts were arranged as follows: in the morning, after the roll-call or "verification," breakfast, consisting of brick tea and black rye-bread, was served to the prisoners in their cells. The working parties then set

1 "Siberia and Penal Servitude," by S. Maxímof. St. Petersburg, 1871. "Afar," by M. I. Orfánof. Moscow, 1883.

Mr. Orfánof says, for example,—and says it in italics,—that in the course of nine years' service in Siberia, he "never saw a prison in which there were less than twice the number of prisoners for which it was intended." (Page 233.) See also Appendix F.

out on foot for the gold placers, carrying with them bread and tea for lunch. This midday meal was eaten in the open air beside a camp-fire, regardless of weather, and sometimes in fierce winter storms. Late in the afternoon the convicts returned on foot to their cells and ate on their sleeping-platforms the first hearty and nourishing meal of the day, consisting of hot soup, meat, bread, and perhaps a little more brick tea. After the evening verification they were locked up for the night, and lay down to sleep in closely packed rows on the *nári*, or sleeping-benches, without removing their clothing, and without making any preparations for the night beyond bringing in the *paráshas*, or excrement buckets, spreading down their thin patchwork crazy-quilts, and rolling up some of their spare clothing to put under their heads. The clothing furnished to a hard-labor convict at Karâ consists—or should, by law, consist—of one coarse linen shirt and one pair of linen trousers every six months; one cap, one pair of thick trousers, and one gray overcoat every year; a *pólushúba*, or outer coat of sheepskin, every two years; one pair of *bródni*, or loose leather boots, every three and a half months in winter; and one pair of *kátí*, or low shoes, every twenty-two days in summer. The quality of the food and clothing furnished by the Government may be inferred from the fact that the cost of maintaining a hard-labor convict at the mines is about $50 a year, or a little less than fourteen cents a day.[1]

After having examined the Middle Karâ prison as carefully as time and circumstances would permit, we proceeded up the valley to a point just beyond the penal settlement of Upper Karâ, and, leaving our vehicles there, walked down towards the river to the mines.

The auriferous sand in the valley of the Karâ lies buried under a stratum of clay, gravel, or stones, varying in thickness from ten to twenty feet. The hard labor of the con-

[1] This was the estimate given me by Major Pótulof.

CONVICTS RETURNING AT NIGHT FROM THE MINES.

victs consists in the breaking up and removal of this overlying stratum and the transportation of the "pay gravel," or gold-bearing sand, to the "machine," where it is agitated with water in a sort of huge iron hopper and then allowed to run out with the water into a series of shallow inclined troughs, or flumes, where the "black sand" and the particles of gold fall to the bottom and are stopped by low transverse cleats.

The first placer that we visited is shown in the illustration on page 163. The day was cold and dark, a light powdery snow was falling, and a more dreary picture than that presented by the mine can hardly be imagined. Thirty or forty convicts, surrounded by a cordon of Cossacks, were at work in a sort of deep gravel pit, the bottom of which was evidently at one time the bed of the stream. Some of them were loosening with pointed crowbars the hardpacked clay and gravel, some were shoveling it upon small hand-barrows, while others were carrying it away and dumping it at a distance of 150 or 200 yards. The machine was not in operation, and the labor in progress was nothing more than the preliminary "stripping," or laying bare of the gold-bearing stratum. The convicts, most of whom were in leg-fetters, worked slowly and listlessly, as if they were tired out and longed for night; the silence was broken only by the steady clinking of crowbars, a quick, sharp order now and then from one of the overseers, or the jingling of chains as the convicts walked to and fro in couples carrying hand-barrows. There was little or no conversation except that around a small camp-fire a few yards away, where half a dozen soldiers were crouching on the snowy ground watching a refractory tea-kettle, and trying to warm their benumbed hands over a sullen, fitful blaze. We watched the progress of the work for ten or fifteen minutes, and then, chilled and depressed by the weather and the scene, returned to our vehicle and drove back to the Lower Diggings.

CONVICTS AT WORK IN A KARÁ GOLD PLACER.

The hours of labor in the Karâ mines are from 7 A. M. to 5 P. M. in winter, and from 5 A. M. to 7 P. M. in summer. A considerable part of this time, however, is spent by the convicts in going back and forth between the *razréis*, or "cutting," and the prisons where they spend their nights.

A CONVICT OF THE FREE COMMAND SURREPTITIOUSLY WASHING OUT GOLD.

The amount of gold extracted from the placers annually is eleven *puds*, or about four hundred pounds, all of which goes into the private purse of his Majesty the Tsar. The actual yield of the mines is probably a little more than this, since many of the convicts of the free command surreptitiously wash out gold for themselves and sell it to dealers in that commodity, who smuggle it across the

Chinese frontier. To have "golden wheat," as the convicts call it, in one's possession at all in Siberia is a penal offense; but the profits of secret trade in it are so great that many small speculators run the risk of buying it from the convicts, while the latter argue that "the gold is God's," and that they have a perfect right to mine it for themselves if they can do so without too much danger of detection and punishment. The cost of maintaining the Kará penal establishment was estimated by Major Pótulof at 500,000 *rúbles*, or about $250,000 a year. What proportion of this expense is borne by the Tsar, who takes the proceeds of the convicts' labor, I could not ascertain. He receives from all his gold-mines in Eastern Siberia—the "cabinet mines," as they are called—about 3600 pounds of pure gold per annum.

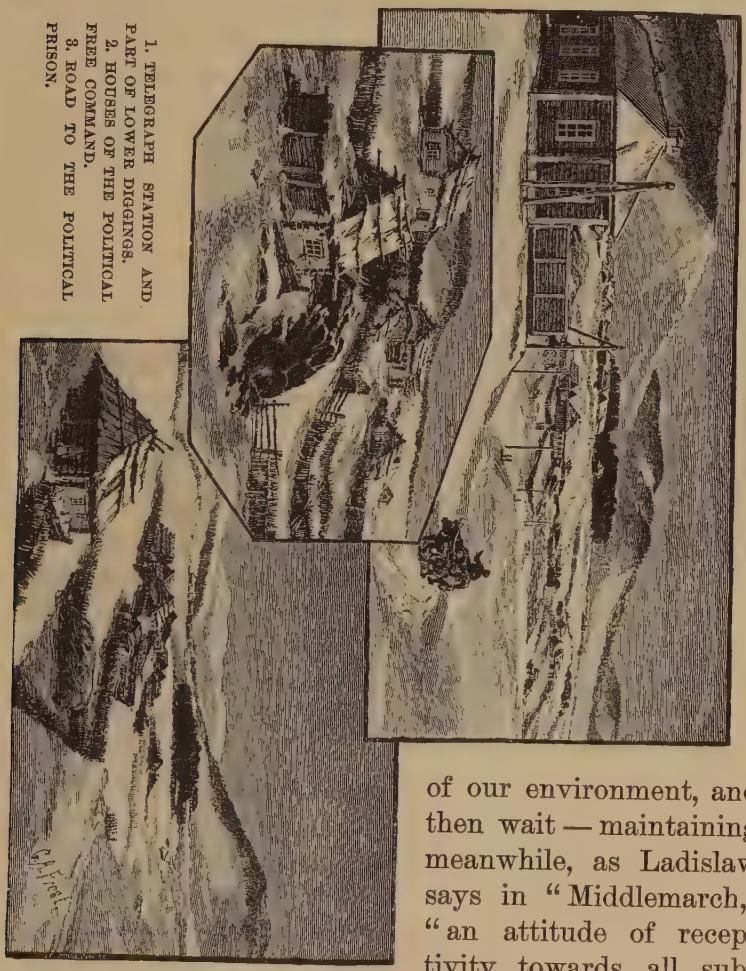
CHAPTER VI

THE KARÁ "FREE COMMAND"

THE most important of the objects that we had in view at the mines of Kará was the investigation of penal servitude in its relation to political offenders. Common, hard-labor felons, such as burglars, counterfeiters, and murderers, we had seen, or could see, in a dozen other places; but political convicts were to be found only in the log prisons and penal settlements of Kará, and there, if anywhere, their life must be studied. In order to succeed in the task that we had set ourselves, it was necessary that we should personally visit and inspect one or both of the political prisons, and obtain unrestricted access, in some way, to the small body of state criminals who had finished their "term of probation" and were living under surveillance in the so-called "free command." We were well aware that these were not easy things to do; but we were no longer inexperienced and guileless tourists, dependent wholly upon letters of introduction and official consent. We had had six months' training in the school that sharpens the wits of the politicals themselves, we had learned how best to deal with suspicious police and gendarme officers, we were in possession of all the information and all the suggestions that political ex-convicts in other parts of Siberia could give us, and we saw no reason to despair of success.

It seemed to me that the best policy for us to pursue, at first, was to make as many friends as possible; get hold of

the threads of social and official relationship in the penal settlement where we found ourselves; avoid manifestations of interest in the political convicts; make a careful study



1. TELEGRAPH STATION AND PART OF LOWER DIGGINGS.
2. HOUSES OF THE POLITICAL FREE COMMAND.
3. ROAD TO THE POLITICAL PRISON.

of our environment, and then wait — maintaining meanwhile, as Ladislaw says in "Middlemarch," "an attitude of receptivity towards all sublime chances." Nothing was to be gained and everything might be risked by premature or over-hasty action. For three or four days, therefore, we did not attempt to do anything except to visit the common-criminal prisons and the mines, talk with the officials who called

upon us, make ourselves agreeable to Major Pótulof and his pretty wife, and study the situation. It soon became evident to me that there would be no use in asking for permission to see the political convicts of the free command, and that if we made their acquaintance at all we should have to do it secretly. I knew most of them by name and reputation; I had a letter of introduction to one of them,— Miss Nathalie Armfeldt,— and I had been furnished by her friends with a map of the Lower Diggings, showing the situation of the little cabin in which she and her mother lived; but how to visit her, or open communications with her secretly, in a small village swarming with Cossacks and gendarmes, and, moreover, in a village where a foreigner was as closely and curiously watched and stared at as the Tsar of all the Russias would be in a New England hamlet, I did not know. But that was not the worst of it. I soon discovered that I could not even get away from Major Pótulof. From the moment of our arrival he gave up all his other duties and devoted himself exclusively to us. If we stayed at home all day, he remained all day at home. If we went out, he accompanied us. I could not make a motion towards my hat or my overcoat without his asking, "Where are you going?" If I replied that I was going out for exercise, or for a little walk, he would say, "Wait a minute and I will go with you." What could I do? He evidently did not intend that we should see some things in Karâ, or have an opportunity to make any independent investigations. I understood and fully appreciated his situation as a high officer of the Crown, and I was sorry to cause him any uneasiness or annoyance; but I had undertaken to ascertain the real state of affairs, and I intended to do it by any means that seemed to be within the limits of honor and fairness. The most embarrassing feature of the situation, from a moral point of view, was that growing out of our presence in Major Pótulof's house as his guests. It did not seem to be fair to mislead the

man whose hospitality we were enjoying, or even to conceal from him our real purposes; and yet we had no alternative. Our only chance of success lay in secrecy. If we should intimate to Major Pótulof that we desired to see the political convicts of the free command, and to hear what they might have to say concerning their life and the treatment to which they had been subjected, he would probably express grave disapproval; and then we, as his guests, should be in honor bound to respect his authority. It would hardly be fair to eat a man's bread and then openly disregard his expressed wishes in a matter that might be of vital interest to him as well as to us. I revolved these and many other similar considerations in my mind for two or three days, and finally decided that if I could see the political convicts before Major Pótulof had said anything to me on the subject I would do it — acting, of course, upon my own responsibility, at my own risk, and, if possible, in such a way as to relieve him from the least suspicion of complicity. I did not see why we should be tied hand and foot by accidental obligations of hospitality growing out of a situation into which we had virtually been forced. As soon as I had come to this decision I began to watch for opportunities; but I soon found myself involved in a network of circumstances and personal relations that rendered still more difficult and hazardous the course I intended to pursue. On the second day after our arrival we received a call from Captain Nikólin, the gendarme commandant of the political prisons. He had heard of our sudden appearance, and had come to see who we were and what we wanted in that dreaded penal settlement. He made upon me, from the first, a very unfavorable impression; but I was not prepared, nevertheless, for the contemptuous, almost insulting, coldness of the reception given to him by Major Pótulof. It was apparent, at a glance, that the two men were upon terms of hostility; and for a moment I wondered why Nikólin should put himself in a position to

be so discourteously treated. Most men would have regarded such a reception as equivalent to a slap in the face, and would have left the house at the first opportunity. Gendarme officers, however, are trained to submit to anything, if by submission they can attain their ends. Captain Nikólin wished to see the American travelers, and, notwithstanding the chilly nature of the reception given him, he was as bland as a May morning. It was obviously my policy to show him as much cordiality as I possibly could without irritating Major Pótulof. I desired not only to remove any suspicions that he might entertain with regard to us, but, if possible, to win his confidence. "It must gratify even a gendarme officer," I thought, "to be treated with marked respect and cordiality by foreign travelers, when he has just been openly affronted by one of his own associates. We, as Major Pótulof's guests, might naturally be expected to follow his lead. If we take the opposite course, Nikólin will give us credit not only for courtesy, but for independence of judgment and clear perception of character, and we shall thus score a point." I never had any reason to doubt the soundness of this reasoning. Nikólin was evidently gratified by the unexpected evidences of interest and respect that appeared in our behavior towards him, and when he took his leave he shook my hand and expressed the hope that we might meet again. He did not dare, in Major Pótulof's presence, to invite us to call upon him, nor did we venture to promise that we would do so; but we intended, nevertheless, to pay him a visit just as soon as we could escape from surveillance. Major Pótulof had delicacy or prudence enough not to say a word in dispraise of Nikólin after the latter had gone; but in subsequent conversation with other officers I learned that the personal relations between the two men were greatly strained, and that Nikólin was generally hated and despised, by the regular army officers at the post, as a secret spy and informer.

"He writes full reports to St. Petersburg of everything we do," said one officer to me; "but," he added, "let him write. I 'm not afraid of him. We have had four or five gendarme officers in charge of the political prison here in the last three years, and he 's the worst of the whole lot."

This information with regard to Nikólin and his relations to Pótulof greatly complicated the situation. Suppose I should succeed in making the acquaintance of the political convicts of the free command; Nikólin would almost certainly hear of it, and would probably find out that I had brought the convicts letters. He would at once report the facts to St. Petersburg, and would make them the basis of an accusation against his enemy Pótulof by saying: "These American travelers are Pótulof's guests. They have visited the political convicts secretly at night, and have even committed a penal offense by carrying letters. They would hardly have dared to do this without Pótulof's knowledge and consent; consequently Pótulof has been accessory to a violation of law, and has interfered with the discharge of my duties. I cannot consent to be held responsible for the political convicts if Major Pótulof is going to aid foreign travelers in getting interviews with them and carrying letters to and from them."

The result of this would be that I, while receiving Major Pótulof's hospitality, should be betraying him to his enemies and getting him into trouble — a thing that went terribly against all my instincts of honor. But even this was not all. Captain Nikólin, as I subsequently learned, was strongly opposed to the ticket-of-leave organization known as the free command, and had repeatedly recommended its abolition. My visit to the political convicts — should I make one — would furnish him with the strongest kind of argument in support of his assertion that the free command was a dangerous innovation. He would write or telegraph to the Minister of the Interior: "I understand that it is the intention of the Government to keep the more

dangerous class of state criminals in complete isolation, allowing them no communication with their relatives except through the gendarmerie. It is manifestly impossible for me to give this intention effect if political convicts are allowed to live outside the prison where they can be seen

A PART OF THE LOWER DIGGINGS WITH THE POLITICAL PRISON IN THE DISTANCE.

and interviewed by strangers. Foreign travelers are coming more and more frequently to Siberia, and Karâ is no longer an unknown or an inaccessible place. If army officers like Pótulof are going to aid such foreign travelers in opening communication with the political convicts, the Government must either abolish the free command and recommit its members to prison, or else abandon the idea of keeping them in isolation."

It was not difficult to foresee the probable consequences of such a report. I might, by a single secret visit, bring disaster upon the whole free command, and cause the re-

turn of all its members to chains, leg-fetters, and prison cells. That I should be the means of adding to the miseries of these unfortunate people, instead of relieving them, was an almost insupportable thought; and I lay awake nearly all of one night balancing probabilities and trying to make up my mind whether it would be worth while to run such risks. I finally decided to adhere to my original intention and make the acquaintance of the political convicts of the free command at all hazards, provided I could escape the courteous, hospitable, but unceasing vigilance of Major Pótulof.

I lived in Kará five days without having a single opportunity to get out-of-doors unaccompanied and unwatched. At last my chance came. On the sixth day Major Pótulof was obliged to go to Ust Kará to attend a meeting of an army board, or court of inquiry, convened to investigate the recent destruction by fire of a large Government flour storehouse.[1] He had said nothing to me about the political convicts; he had apparently become convinced that we were "safe" enough to leave, and he went away commending us laughingly to the care of his wife. Before he had

[1] The history of this storehouse furnishes an interesting illustration of the corruption and demoralization that are characteristic of the Russian bureaucratic system everywhere, and particularly in Siberia. The building should have contained, and was supposed to contain, at the time it was burned, 20,000 *puds* (360 tons) of Government flour, intended for the use of the convicts at the Kará mines. Upon making an examination of the ruins after the fire it was discovered that a small quantity of flour, which belonged to a private individual and had been stored in the building temporarily as an accommodation, was only slightly charred on the outside, and that three-fourths of it could still be used. Of the 20,000 *puds* of Government flour, however, not the slightest trace could be found, and an investigation showed that it had all been stolen by somebody, and that the building had been burned to conceal the theft. A few months later, after our departure from Kará, and while the investigation was still in progress, Major Pótulof's house, which contained all the documents relating to the case, was destroyed by an incendiary fire in the same mysterious way. The censor has never allowed the results of the investigation to be published in the Siberian newspapers, and I do not know who, if anybody, was found to be guilty of the double crime. In most cases of this kind the relations of the criminals with the higher authorities are found to be such as to necessitate a suppression of the facts and a hushing up of the whole matter. I presume that it was so in this case.

been gone an hour I tore out the pocket of my large, loose fur overcoat, dropped down between the outside cloth and the lining a few little presents that I had promised to give to the political convicts, transferred from my waist-belt to my pocket the letters that I had for them and the rough map of the village with which I was provided, and then set out on foot for the political prison. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon. Major Pótulof expected to be absent until the following night, so that I could safely count upon twenty-four hours of freedom from surveillance. My plan was to pay a visit first to Captain Nikólin, get upon the most friendly possible terms with him, remove any lingering suspicions that he might still entertain with regard to us, and then, about dark, go directly from his house to the cabin of Miss Nathalie Armfeldt, the political convict from Kiev to whom I had a letter of introduction. My object in calling first upon Captain Nikólin was twofold. In the first place, I felt sure that he would know that Major Pótulof had just gone to Ust Karâ, and I thought it would please and compliment the gendarme officer to see that I had availed myself of my very first moment of freedom to call upon him, notwithstanding Pótulof's hostility to him. In the second place, I reasoned that if I should be seen going to the house of a political convict it would be safer and would excite less suspicion to be seen going there directly from the house of the commandant than from my own quarters. In the former case it would, very likely, be thought that I was acting with the commandant's knowledge or permission; and in any case open boldness would be safer than skulking timidity.

Captain Nikólin was an old and experienced gendarme officer of the most subtle and unscrupulous type, who had received his training under General Muravióf, "the hangman," in Poland, and had been about thirty years in the service. Personally he was a short, heavily built man fifty or fifty-five years of age, with a bald head, a full gray beard,

thin, tightly closed, rather cruel lips, an impenetrable face, and cold gray eyes. He had the suavity and courteous manners of the accomplished gendarme officer, but the unfavorable impression that he made upon me at our first meeting was deepened, rather than effaced, by subsequent acquaintance. He was in undress uniform, and he greeted me with what he evidently intended for frank, open cordiality, softening, so far as possible, all the hard lines of his face; but he could not bring a spark of good fellowship into his cold, watchful gray eyes, and I felt conscious that all his real mental processes were carefully masked. So far as I could read his character, its one weak point was personal pride in the importance and responsibility of his position—pride in the fact that he, a mere captain of gendarmes, had been selected in St. Petersburg and sent to Siberia to command this important prison; had been freed from all local control; and had been given the unusual privilege of communicating directly with the Minister of the Interior, which was the next thing to communicating directly with the Tsar. It seemed to me that a man who felt such a pride, and who knew that in spite of his position he was despised by all the regular army-officers at the post, would be gratified to find that an intelligent American, living in the very house of one of his (Nikólin's) enemies, had clearness of insight and independence of judgment enough to call upon him the moment Pótulof's restraint was removed, and to treat him with marked deference and respect. To what extent this reasoning was well founded I do not know, but upon it I acted. I apologized for not calling upon him before, and explained that I had been prevented from doing this by circumstances beyond my control. He bowed gracefully, said that he understood the circumstances perfectly, and asked me to do him the honor of drinking tea with him. A steaming *samovár* was soon brought in by a soldier, our cups were filled with the beverage that cheers but does not inebriate, cigarettes were lighted, and we settled

ourselves in easy-chairs for a comfortable chat. I narrated with as much spirit as possible our adventures in Siberia; brought out casually the fact that I was a member of the American Geographical Society; referred to my previous connection with the Russian-American Telegraph Company; described dog-sledge travel and tent life with the wandering Koráks; and gave an account of my pleasant interview with Mr. Vlangálli, the Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs in St. Petersburg, in order to show him that I had come to Siberia openly and boldly, with the consent and approbation of the highest Russian officials. He seemed to like to hear me talk; and, as I had not the slightest objection to talking, I rambled on until I had given him a detailed history of my whole life up to the year of our Lord 1885. If I omitted anything, I omitted it through forgetfulness or because he failed to draw it out. He inquired whether I intended to write an account of my Siberian trip, and I replied that certainly I did; that I was in the service of *The Century Magazine;* that I had already written one series of articles on Siberia, and intended to write another as soon as I should get home. This seemed to interest him, and I therefore poured out information about American magazines in general and *The Century* in particular; invited him to come to our house and look over Mr. Frost's sketches; told him how much money *The Century* purposed to spend in illustrating our papers, and expressed regret that his ignorance of English would prevent him from reading them. He remarked hopefully that they might be translated. I replied that I trusted they would be, since my first book had been twice translated into Russian; and that, in any event, he would be interested in looking at the illustrations. What else I said in the course of our long conversation I cannot now remember, but never, I think, did I give any other man so much information about myself and my affairs as I gave that gendarme officer.

My frankness and my childlike confidence in him finally began to produce the desired results. His manner softened and became more cordial; he poured out for me a third or a fourth cup of tea, asked me if I would not like to have some rum in it; and then, finding that I could be a sympathetic listener as well as a frank and communicative talker, he began to give me information about himself. He described to me the organization of the gendarmerie and the way in which gendarme officers are educated; gave me his own personal history; told me how many times and under what circumstances he had been promoted; how much salary he received; what decorations he had; how much longer he would have to serve before he could retire on a pension; and said, with a little pride, that he was the only officer of his rank in all Siberia who had the right to communicate directly with the Minister of the Interior. The conversation finally drifted into a discussion of common-criminal exile, and to my great surprise he vigorously condemned the *étapes* and the forwarding prisons; declared that the life of common convicts on the road was simply awful; and said that the banishment of criminals to Siberia was not only ruinous to the persons banished, but very detrimental to all the interests of the country. To me this was a wholly unexpected turn, and for a moment I hardly knew what course to take. He might be merely posing as a philanthropist,— a sort of Howard in a gendarme officer's uniform,— or he might be luring me on with a view to finding out how much I knew and what my opinions were. An instant of reflection convinced me that my safest course would be to follow his lead, without betraying too much knowledge of the subject, and to lay as much stress as possible on the few good prisons that I had seen. I therefore deplored the overcrowding of the forwarding prisons and the bad sanitary condition of the *étapes*, but referred to the new central prison at Vérkhni Údinsk as an evidence that the Government was trying to improve the condition

of things by erecting better buildings. Without any suggestion or prompting from me, Captain Nikólin then diverted the current of our conversation to another branch of the subject and began to talk about the political convicts at the mines of Karâ. Their condition, he said, was much better, and their life much easier, than people generally supposed. They lived together in large, well-lighted *kámeras;* they were not required to do any work; they had a good library; they could receive money from their friends; and at the expiration of their "term of probation" they were set at liberty, and were allowed to live in houses and to cultivate little gardens of their own. I expressed great surprise at this presentation of the case, and said, "Do you mean to tell me that the political convicts don't work in the mines?"

"Work!" he exclaimed. "Certainly not. They have nothing to do but sit in large, comfortable, well-lighted rooms, and read or study."

"Do they ever have communication with their friends or relatives in European Russia?" I inquired.

"Certainly," he replied. "That was one of the things that I insisted on when I came here, that they *should* be allowed to write to their friends and relatives. Of course I read their letters, or rather their postal cards, but they can write as much as they like."

"We have always had the impression in America," I said, "that state criminals in Siberia are compelled to work in underground mines, often chained to wheelbarrows, and that their life is a constant struggle with hardships and misery."

He smiled a calm, superior sort of smile, and said that he himself had had precisely similar ideas before coming to Siberia, and that he had been surprised just as I was. "Why," said he, "if you should take a look into one of the *kámeras* of the political prison at this moment you would see the prisoners sitting around a big table, reading and writing, just as if they were in some library."

I remarked that that would be a very pleasant thing to see, as well as to write about, and asked him if there would be any objection to my taking a look into one of the *kámeras.*

"Well — yes," he replied hesitatingly. "I have no authority to allow any one to inspect the prison. I can show you, however, some of the books from the library — even English books."

He thereupon called a soldier from the hall and sent him to the prison with orders to bring back any English books or periodicals that happened to be in. The soldier shortly returned with a copy of Shelley's poems and a recent number of *Punch.* These Nikólin handed to me triumphantly, as proofs that the political convicts had a library, and were even furnished with English periodicals.

"Not long ago," he continued, "they had theatrical performances in one of the *kámeras;* and at one time they actually published a little manuscript newspaper for their own amusement."

He then got out the prison books to show me how much money the political convicts had received from their relatives that year. The total amount was 6044 *rúbles,* or about $3022.[1]

"Do the prisoners themselves have the spending of this money?" I inquired.

[1] Upon my return to Irkútsk I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of an officer who was employed in the Comptroller's Department, and who had access to all the accounts of the Kará prisons. I asked him if he would be kind enough to ascertain for me how much money had been sent to the political convicts at Kará by their relatives in the first ten months of 1885. He made the investigation and reported that the prisoners had received, on an average, 37½ cents a month per capita, or about $375 in all. Captain Nikólin apparently had shown me a "fixed-up" and deceptive statement, for the purpose of making me believe that the political convicts were in receipt of $3000 or $4000 a year over and above their subsistence, and that, consequently, they were living in comparative luxury. I have no doubt that the computation made by the officer of the Comptroller's Department in Irkútsk was an accurate one, and that $375 was really the amount that the prisoners had received. Why the sum was not larger I shall explain in another place. Three hundred and seventy-five dollars every ten months, if divided among a hundred convicts, would give each of them about a cent and a quarter a day.

"Yes," he replied. "It is not given into their hands; but they can direct the expenditure of it, and buy with it anything that the prison regulations allow."

I received all these revelations with pleased surprise, and became almost enthusiastic when the humane and philanthropic gendarme officer drew for me a charming picture of happy state criminals, living contentedly together in large, airy rooms, studying English literature in a well-appointed library, reading *Punch* after dinner for relaxation, publishing a newspaper once a week for self-improvement, and getting up a theatrical entertainment in a *kámera* now and then as a safety-valve for their exuberant spirits! I was grieved and shocked, however, to learn, a moment later, that these well-treated convicts were not worthy of the gracious clemency shown to them by a benevolent paternal government, and repaid its kindness with the blackest treachery and ingratitude.

"You have no idea, Mr. Kennan," said Captain Nikólin, "how unscrupulous they are, and how much criminal skill they show in concealing forbidden things, and in smuggling letters into and out of prison. Suppose that you were going to search a political convict as thoroughly as possible, how would you do it?"

I replied that I should strip him naked and make a careful examination of his clothing.

"Is that all you would do?" he inquired, with a surprised air.

I said that no other course of procedure suggested itself to me just at that moment.

"Would you look in his ears?"

"No," I answered; "I should not think of looking in his ears."

"Would you search his mouth?"

Again I replied in the negative.

"Would you look in a hollow tooth?"

I solemnly declared that such a thing as looking in a

hollow tooth for a letter would never, under any circumstances, have occurred to me.

"Well," he said triumphantly, "I have taken tissue paper with writing on it out of a prisoner's ear, out of a prisoner's mouth, and once I found a dose of deadly poison concealed under a capping of wax in a convict's hollow tooth. Ah-h-h!" he exclaimed, rubbing his hands, "they are very sly, but I know all their tricks."

A cold shiver ran down my back as I suddenly thought of the things that lay hidden in my overcoat. Between the cloth and the lining were two Chinese tea-cups, a hand-mirror, and a small red feather duster, which had been intrusted to me by an exiled lady in a village near Irkútsk, and which I had promised to deliver to Miss Armfeldt with assurances of the donor's remembrance and love. I had left the overcoat hanging in the hall, and if this gendarme officer was so extremely suspicious as to look in ears for letters and in hollow teeth for poison, perhaps he had already ordered one of his subordinates to make an examination of it. How I should explain the presence between the cloth and the lining of such unusual articles of equipment as two porcelain tea-cups, a hand-mirror, and a red feather duster, I did not know. I might say that Americans are constitutionally sensitive with regard to their personal appearance, and that, when making calls, they always carry looking-glasses in the tail-pockets of their overcoats, in order that they may properly adjust their neckties before entering the drawing-rooms of their acquaintances; but how should I account for the tea-cups and the long-handled feather duster? I might as well try to explain the presence of a mouse-trap and a fire-extinguisher in a diving-bell! For twenty minutes I sat there in an uncomfortable frame of mind, half expecting every time the door opened that a Cossack would enter with the red feather duster in his hand. The apprehended catastrophe, however, did not occur, and Nikólin continued to

pour out information concerning the political convicts and their life at the mines. Much that he said was true; but the truth was so interwoven with misrepresentation that if I had been the ignorant and credulous tourist he supposed me to be I should have been completely deceived. To an on-looker who understood the situation, and could see into both hands, the game that we were playing would have been full of interest. My acquaintance with the political prison was almost as accurate and thorough as that of Captain Nikólin himself. I had a carefully drawn plan of it in a belt around my body; I had a list containing the names of all the prisoners; I could have described to him the appearance and the situation of every object in every cell; I knew exactly what the convicts had to eat and wear and how they spent their time; I knew that four of them had been chained to wheelbarrows and that several were insane; and I could have given him a detailed history of the prison for the five preceding years. With all this information in my mind, with a letter of introduction to the political convicts in my pocket, and with presents for them concealed in my overcoat, I had to sit there and listen coolly to statements that I knew to be false; assume feelings that I did not have; and play, without the quiver of an eyelash, the part of a good-humored, credulous, easy-going tourist who had nothing to conceal, who was incapable of keeping to himself even the details of his own private life, and who was naturally surprised and delighted to find that the political convicts, instead of being chained to wheelbarrows in damp subterranean mines, were really treated with humanity, consideration, and benevolent kindness by an intelligent and philanthropic commandant.

I do not know what impression I made upon Captain Nikólin in the course of our long interview; but I have some reason to believe that I succeeded in blinding and misleading one of the most adroit and unscrupulous gendarme officers in all Eastern Siberia. I may be greatly

mistaken; but if he flatters himself that he deceived me he is at least as much mistaken as I am. I cannot, of course, defend my dealings with this official upon any high moral ground; but I was playing a hazardous game, with everything at stake and no means of self-protection except diplomacy. In my baggage, or on my person, I had revolutionary documents, plans of prisons, papers from Government archives, letters to and from political convicts, and ten or fifteen note-books that would have incriminated not only scores of exiles in all parts of Siberia but many fearless and honest officials who had trusted me and given me information. If suspicion should be aroused and I should be searched, it would not only bring disaster upon all of these people, as well as upon me, but would probably result in the loss of all my material and in the punishment of everybody who had had anything to do with furnishing it. In view of the critical nature of my situation, and the number of lives and fortunes that might depend upon my safety, I sincerely trust that the recording angel dropped a tear or two upon some of my statements to Captain Nikólin and blotted them out forever.

Late in the afternoon the commandant and I parted, with mutual assurances of distinguished consideration, and I directed my steps towards the little cabin of Miss Nathalie Armfeldt, which was situated about midway between the political prison and the house of Major Pótulof on the outskirts of the Lower Diggings. My nerves were strung up to a high state of tension by my interview with Captain Nikólin; I was flushed with a consciousness of success, and I felt equal to anything.

Miss Armfeldt, whose history I already knew, was the daughter of a prominent Russian general now dead, and was the sister of Madam Fedchénko, wife of a well-known Russian scientist and explorer. The family was a wealthy and aristocratic one, and both Miss Armfeldt and her mother were friends, or at least acquaintances, of the emi-

nent Russian novelist Count Tolstói. Miss Armfeldt herself spoke French, German, and English, drew, painted, and was an educated and accomplished woman.[1] She was arrested in Kiev on the 11th of February, 1879, while attending one of the meetings of a secret revolutionary society. They were surprised by the police late in the evening, and the men of the party resisted arrest, drawing revolvers and firing at the police and the gendarmes. A sharp skirmish followed, in the course of which one gendarme and two of the revolutionists were shot dead and several on each side wounded. The whole party was finally captured and thrown into prison. For being present at the time of this armed resistance to the police, although she had not participated in it, and for belonging to the revolutionary party, Miss Armfeldt was sentenced to fourteen years and ten months of penal servitude, with deprivation of all civil rights and exile to Siberia for life.[2] At the time of our visit to Karâ she had finished her term of probation in prison, and was living outside in the free command with her

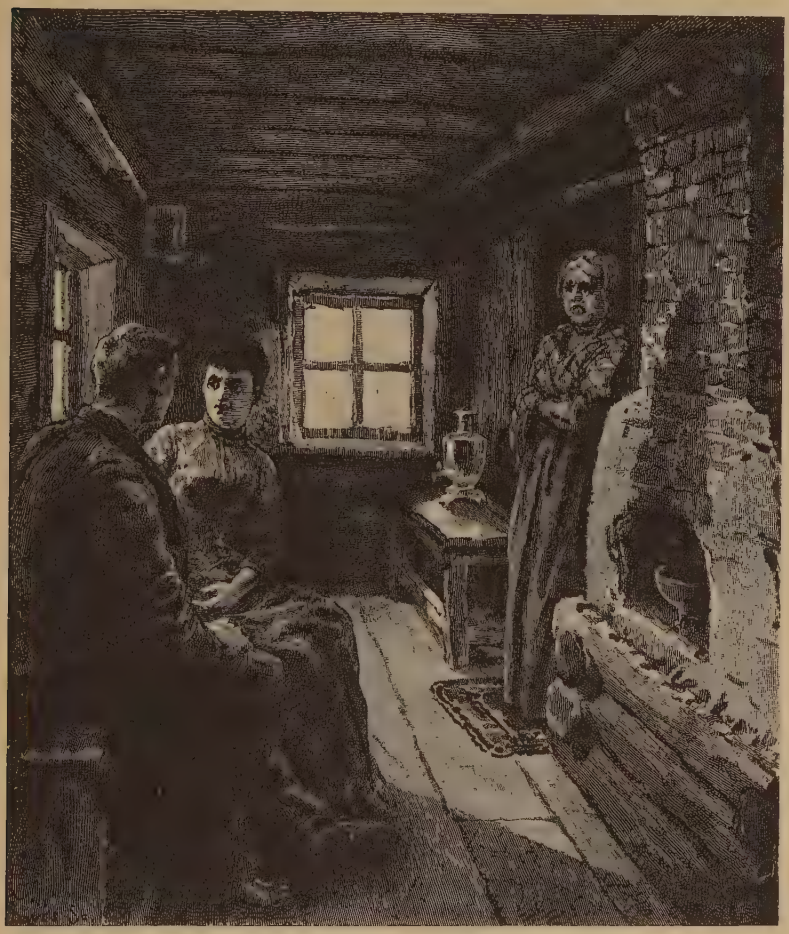
[1] I regret that I am unable to give more details of Miss Armfeldt's life. A Russian revolutionist to whom I applied for information wrote me as follows:

"I knew Miss Armfeldt personally and have some idea of her as an individual; but as to biographical details —such matters interest us so little when we are 'in action' that we hardly ever ask one another about them. I only know that her father was a general, and that her sister, who was a tolerably well-known writer on scientific subjects, was married to the Russian explorer Fedchénko, who perished recently on a mountain in Switzerland. Personally, Nathalie Armfeldt was not one of the striking personalities, such as Perófskaya, Bárdina, and others. She belonged to that modest set of workers in whom the beautiful moral qualities of the Russian revolutionist are shown at their best — absolute devotion and absolute unselfishness. These simple virtues become great, both as qualities and as moving powers, when they are so elevated as to be almost perfectly pure. You have probably seen many of these types among the Siberian exiles. The touching sympathy that permeates what you write about them is a proof of this."

[2] Mr. Debagóri-Mokriévich, who was arrested at this time and sent to Siberia, but who succeeded in making his escape, has published an interesting account of the capture, trial, and condemnation of this party. It consisted of fourteen persons, of whom two were found to be not guilty, two were hanged, and all the rest sent to Siberia for life with fourteen years and ten months of penal servitude. See "Two Years of Life," by Debagóri-Mokriévich. [*Messenger of the Will of the People*, No. 1, p. 21, Geneva, 1883.]

mother, a lady sixty or sixty-five years of age, who had voluntarily come to Siberia to share her daughter's fate.

The sun had set and it was fast growing dark when I reached the little whitewashed cabin which, from the de-



THE CABIN OF THE ARMFELDTS.

scriptions I had had of it, I thought must be the Armfeldts'. I knocked at the heavy wooden door, and in a moment it was unbarred and opened by a young woman.

"Does Miss Armfeldt live here?" I inquired.

"I am Miss Armfeldt," she replied.

"My name is George Kennan," I said; "I am an American traveler, and I have come to Siberia to investigate the exile system. I have met many of your friends, and I bring a letter of introduction to you from Madam N——."

She looked at me for almost a minute in silent and half-incredulous amazement. Finally she seemed to recover herself and said, "Pray come in." I followed her through a small, dark entry into a wretched little room about ten feet long by eight feet wide, with bare floor and ceiling of rough-hewn planks, rough walls of squared logs covered with dingy whitewash, and two small, nearly square windows. The furniture of the room, which was all rude and home-made, consisted of a square pine table without a cloth, three unpainted pine chairs, and a narrow single bedstead covered with a coarse gray blanket. On each side of the door were shelves, upon which were a few domestic vessels and utensils, such as plates, cups and saucers, knives and forks, and a tea-pot. The room contained absolutely nothing else except a basket and a cheap Russian trunk under the bed. Everything was scrupulously neat and clean, but in other respects the house looked like the home of some wretchedly poor Irish laborer. I removed my heavy overcoat, and was about to hand Miss Armfeldt the letter that I had for her, when she caught me suddenly by the arm and said, "Stop! Don't do that! Wait until I put up the window-shutters and bar the door." She lighted a candle with trembling hands, and then ran out and closed the windows with tight board shutters, barred the door, and returning said, "You are not accustomed to the atmosphere of alarm and apprehension in which we live. You might have been seen through the window giving me a letter." She then took the letter; but without opening it fixed her eyes upon me with the expression of bewildered, half-incredulous amazement that had not left her face since I introduced myself at the door. Finally she said, "How did you ever get here?"

I replied that I had come on horseback over the mountains from Strétinsk.

"But how were you ever *allowed* to come here?"

"I was not allowed," I replied. "I came here without anybody's knowledge. I have been in Kará almost a week, and this is the first opportunity I have had to get out-of-doors unwatched."

I then told her that I had come to Siberia to investigate the life of the political convicts, and gave her a brief account of my previous Siberian experience. She looked at me like one half dazed by the shock of some great and sudden surprise. Finally she said, speaking for the first time in English: "Excuse me for staring at you so, and pardon me if I have not seemed to welcome you cordially; but I can hardly believe that I am awake. I am so excited and astonished that I don't know what I am doing or saying. You are the first foreigner that I have seen since my exile, and your sudden appearance here, and in my house, is such an extraordinary event in my life that it has completely overwhelmed me. I feel as Livingstone must have felt when Stanley found him in Central Africa. How did the remarkable idea of coming to Siberia and investigating the life of the political convicts ever enter your head?"

I was answering her question in English, when I heard a feeble and broken voice, which seemed to come from behind the oven, inquiring, in Russian, "Who is there, Nathalie? With whom are you talking?"

"It is an American traveler, mother, who has found us even here at the mines."

The feeble voice was that of Miss Armfeldt's mother, who had been asleep on a cot bed behind a low partition that partly screened the oven, and who had been awakened by our conversation. In a moment she came out to greet me — a worn, broken woman, sixty or sixty-five years of age, with soft gray hair, and a face refined, gentle, intelligent, but deeply lined by care and grief. Her eyes were swollen,

with heavy, dark semicircles under them, as if she had spent many long, weary nights in weeping. It filled my heart with sympathy and pity merely to look at her. I had never seen so sad, hopeless, grief-stricken a face.

I spent half an hour with the Armfeldts and then left them, promising to return at a later hour in the evening, when Miss Armfeldt said she would have the other members of the free command there to meet me. Flushed with nervous excitement, I hurried back to Major Pótulof's house, where I found dinner waiting for me. Every now and then in the course of the meal Mrs. Pótulof would look at me with a curious expression in her face, as if she wondered what I had been doing all the afternoon; but apparently she could not summon up resolution enough to ask me, and it did not become necessary, therefore, for the recording angel to drop any more tears upon my already blotted record.

At seven o'clock I went back to the Armfeldts', where I found a political convict named Kurteief, and a pale delicate young woman who was introduced to me as Madam Kolénkina. I recognized the latter by name as one of the revolutionists sent to the mines for alleged complicity in the plot to assassinate General Mézentsef, the St. Petersburg chief of police, but I was surprised to find her so young, delicate, and harmless-looking a woman. I had been surprised, however, in the same way many times before. The women who have taken an active part in some of the most terrible tragedies of the past fifteen years in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, and Odéssa, who have shown a power of endurance and a stern inflexibility of character rarely found in men, are delicate girls from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, whom I should have taken for teachers in a Sunday-school or rather timid pupils in a female seminary.

One by one the political convicts of the free command began to assemble at Miss Armfeldt's house. Every few minutes a low signal-knock would be heard at one of the

window-shutters, and Miss Armfeldt would go cautiously to the door, inquire who was there, and when satisfied that it was one of her companions would take down the bar and give him admission. The small, dimly lighted cabin, the strained hush of anxiety and apprehension, the soft, mysterious knocking at the window-shutters, the low but eager conversation, and the group of pale-faced men and women who crowded about me with intense, wondering interest, as if I were a man that had just risen from the dead, made me feel like one talking and acting in a strange, vivid dream. There was not, in the whole environment, a single suggestion of the real, commonplace, outside world; and when the convicts, with hushed voices, began to tell me ghastly stories of cruelty, suffering, insanity, and suicide at the mines, I felt almost as if I had entered the gloomy gate over which Dante saw inscribed the dread warning, "Leave hope behind."

About nine o'clock, just as I had taken out my note-book and begun to write, a loud, imperative knock was heard at the side window-shutter. Madam Kolénkina exclaimed in a low, hoarse whisper, "It's the gendarmes! Don't let them come in. Tell them who of us are here, and perhaps they 'll be satisfied." Everybody was silent, and it seemed to me that I could hear my heart beat while Miss Armfeldt went to the door and with cool self-possession said to the gendarmes, "We are all here: my mother, I, Kurteief, Madam Kolénkina, and"— the other names I could not catch. After a moment's parley the gendarmes seemed to go away, Miss Armfeldt shut and re-barred the door, and coming back into the room said with a smile, "They were satisfied; they did n't insist on coming in." Then, turning to me, she added in English: "The gendarmes visit us three times a day to see what we are doing, and to make sure that we have not escaped. Their visits, however, have grown to be formal, and they do not always come in."

Conversation was then resumed, and for two hours or more I listened to stories of convict life in prison, on the road, or at the mines, and answered, as well as I could, the

eager questions of the convicts with regard to the progress of the Russian revolutionary movement. In the course of the talk my attention was accidentally attracted to a person whom I had not particularly noticed before and to whom I had not been introduced. It was a man thirty or thirty-five years of age, with a colorless, strangely vacant face and large, protruding blue eyes. He had seated himself on a low wooden stool directly in front of me, had rested his elbows on his knees with his chin in his open hands, and was staring up at me with a steady and at the same time expressionless gaze in which there seemed to be something unnatural and uncanny. At the first pause in the conversation he said to me abruptly, but in a strange, drawling, monotonous tone, "We — have — a — graveyard — of — our — own — here. — Would — you — like — to — see — it?"

I was so surprised and startled by his manner and by the nature of his question that I did not for a moment reply; but the conviction suddenly flashed upon me that it was a political convict who had lost his reason. As the knocking at the gate after the murder in Macbeth seemed to De Quincey to deepen the emotions excited by the tragedy and to reflect back a sort of added horror upon all that had preceded it, so this strange, unprompted question, with its suggestions of insanity and death, seemed to render more vivid and terrible the stories of human suffering that I had just heard, and to intensify all the emotions roused in my mind by the great tragedy of penal servitude.

I remained with the political convicts that night until after midnight, and then walked home with my blood in a fever that even the frosty atmosphere of a semi-arctic night could not cool. Everybody had gone to bed except Mr. Frost, who was watching anxiously for my return. I threw myself on the divan in my room and tried to get to sleep; but all that I had just seen and heard kept surging through my mind, and it was morning before I finally lost consciousness.

CHAPTER VII

STATE CRIMINALS AT KARÁ

ON the morning after my first visit to the political convicts of the free command I called again at the little cabin of the Armfeldts, taking Mr. Frost with me. Major Pótulof was expected back from Ust Karà that night, and I knew his return would put a stop to my operations. It was important, therefore, that I should make the best possible use of the twelve or fourteen hours of freedom that still remained to me. I did not expect to be able, for any great length of time, to conceal from the authorities my intercourse with the political convicts. I was well aware that it must, sooner or later, be discovered, and all that I hoped to do was to get as much information as possible before the inevitable interference should come. There was some risk, of course, in visiting the houses of the free command openly by daylight; but we could not afford to waste any time in inaction, and I had promised Miss Armfeldt that I would return early that forenoon if not prevented by some unforeseen complication or embarrassment.

A brisk walk of fifteen or twenty minutes brought us to our destination, and we were admitted to the house by Miss Armfeldt herself. In the searching light of a clear, cold, winter morning, the little cabin, with its whitewashed log walls, plank floor, and curtainless windows, looked even more bare and cheerless than it had seemed to me when I first saw it. Its poverty-stricken appearance, moreover, was emphasized, rather than relieved, by the

presence, in the middle of the room, of a large, rudely fashioned easel, upon which stood an unframed oil painting. There seemed to me something strangely incongruous in this association of art with penal servitude, this blending of luxury with extreme destitution, and as I returned Miss Armfeldt's greeting I could not help looking inquiringly at the picture and then at her, as if to ask, "How did you ever happen to bring an oil-painting to the mines of Karâ?" She understood my unspoken query, and, turning the easel half around so that I could see the picture, said: "I have been trying to make a portrait of my mother. She thinks that she must go back to Russia this year on account of her other children. Of course I shall never see her again, —she is too old and feeble to make another journey to Eastern Siberia,—and I want something to recall her face to me when she has gone out of my life. I know that it is a bad portrait, and I am almost ashamed to show it to you; but I wish to ask your help. I have only a few colors, I cannot get any more, and perhaps Mr. Frost may be able to suggest some way of using my scanty materials to better advantage."

I looked at the wretched, almost ghastly, portrait in silence, but with a heart full of the deepest sympathy and pity. It bore a recognizable resemblance to the original, and showed some signs of artistic talent and training; but the canvas was of the coarsest and most unsuitable quality; the colors were raw and crude; and it was apparent, at a glance, that the artist had vainly struggled with insuperable difficulties growing out of a scanty and defective equipment. With the few tubes of raw color at her command she had found it impossible to imitate the delicate tints of living flesh, and the result of her loving labor was a portrait that Mr. Frost evidently regarded with despair, and that seemed to me to be little more than a ghastly caricature. It was pitiful to see how hard the daughter had tried, with wholly inadequate means of execution, to make for herself a likeness of the mother whom she was so

soon to lose, and it was even more pitiful to think that before the close of another year the daughter would be left alone at the mines with this coarse, staring, deathlike portrait as her only consolation. I looked at the picture for a moment in silence, unable to think of any comment that would not seem cold or unsympathetic. Its defects were glaring, but I could not bring myself to criticise a work of love executed under such circumstances and in the face of such disheartening difficulties. Leaving Mr. Frost to examine Miss Armfeldt's scanty stock of brushes and colors, I turned to Mrs. Armfeldt and asked her how she had summoned up resolution enough, at her age, to undertake such a tremendous journey as that from St. Petersburg to the mines of Kará.

"I could not help coming," she said simply. "God knows what they were doing to people here. Nathalie was beaten by soldiers with the butt-ends of guns. Others were starving themselves to death. I could get only vague and alarming reports in St. Petersburg, and so I came here to see for myself. I could not bear to think of Nathalie living alone in the midst of such horrors."

"When did these things happen?" I inquired.

"In 1882 and 1883," she replied. "In May, 1882, eight prisoners made their escape, and after that the life of all the political convicts was made so hard that they finally declared a hunger-strike and starved themselves thirteen days."

While Mrs. Armfeldt and I were talking, Victor Castiúrin, Madam Kolénkina, and two or three other political convicts entered the room, Miss Armfeldt brought out the *samovár* and gave us all tea, and the conversation became general. I should be glad, if I had the requisite space, to repeat in detail the interesting and vivid account of life in the Kará prisons that was given me at Miss Armfeldt's house that day; but six or eight hours' conversation cannot be put into a chapter or two, and I must content myself with a brief narrative of my personal experience, and a short outline

sketch of the life of political convicts at the mines of Karâ between the years 1880 and 1885.

I made my last call at the house of the Armfeldts on the afternoon of November 7th, just twenty-four hours after I first entered it. I was well aware that the return of Major Pótulof that night would put a stop to my visits, and that, in all probability, I should never see these unfortunate people again; while they, knowing that this was their last opportunity to talk with one who was going back to the civilized world and would meet their relatives and friends, clung to me with an eagerness that was almost pathetic. I promised the Armfeldts that I would call upon Count Leo Tolstói and describe to him their life and circumstances,[1] left my address with them so that they might communicate with me should they ever have an opportunity to write, and took letters from them to their relatives in European Russia. It may perhaps seem to the reader that in carrying letters to and from political convicts in Siberia I ran an unnecessary and unjustifiable risk, inasmuch as the act was a penal offense, and if discovered would probably have led to our arrest, to the confiscation of all our papers, and, at the very least, to our immediate expulsion from the Empire under guard. I fully appreciated the danger, but, nevertheless, I could not refuse to take such letters. If you were a political convict at the mines, and had a wife or a mother in European Russia to whom you had not been allowed to write for years, and if I, an American trav-

[1] I kept this promise, and told Count Tolstói all that he seemed to care to hear with regard to the Armfeldts' situation. He manifested, however, a disinclination to listen to accounts of suffering among the political convicts in Eastern Siberia; would not read manuscripts that I brought expressly to show him; and said distinctly that while he felt sorry for many of the politicals he could not help them, and was not at all in sympathy with their methods. They had resorted, he said, to violence, and they must expect to suffer from violence. I was told in Moscow that when Madam Uspénskaya, wife of one of the political convicts at Karâ, went to Count Tolstói to solicit a contribution of money to be used in ameliorating, as far as possible, the condition of politicals at the mines, she met with a decided refusal. The Count was not willing, apparently, to show even a benevolent and charitable sympathy with men and women whose actions he wholly disapproved.

eler, should come to you and ask you to put yourself in my power and run the risk of recommittal to prison and leg-fetters by telling me all that I wanted to know, and if I should then refuse to carry a letter to your mother or your wife, you would think that I must be either very cowardly or very hard-hearted. I could not refuse to do it. If they were willing to run the risk of writing such letters, I was willing to run the risk of carrying them. I always consented, and sometimes volunteered to take them, although I was perfectly well aware that they would cause me many anxious hours.

Just before dark I bade the Armfeldts and the other members of the free command good-by, telling them that I should try to see them once more, but that I feared it would be impossible. Major Pótulof did not return until midnight, and I did not see him until the next morning. We met for the first time at breakfast. He greeted me courteously, but formally, omitting the customary handshake, and I felt at once a change in the social atmosphere. After bidding me good-morning, he sat for ten or fifteen minutes looking moodily into his tea-cup without speaking a word. I had anticipated this situation and had decided upon a course of action. I felt sincere regard for Major Pótulof, he had treated us very kindly, I understood perfectly that I had placed him in an awkward and unpleasant position, and I intended to deal with him frankly and honestly. I therefore broke the silence by saying that, during his absence, I had made the acquaintance of the political convicts of the free command.

"Yes," he said, without raising his eyes from his tea-cup, "I heard so; and," he continued, after a moment's pause, "it is my duty to say to you that you have acted very rashly."

"Why?" I inquired.

"Because," he replied, "the Government looks with great suspicion upon foreigners who secretly make the acquaintance of the political convicts. It is not allowed, and you will get yourself into serious trouble."

"But," I said, "no one has ever told me that it was not allowed. I can hardly be supposed, as a foreigner, to know that I have no right to speak to people who are practically at liberty, and whom I am liable to meet any day in the village street. The members of the free command are not in prison; they are walking about the settlement in freedom. Everybody else can talk to them; why cannot I?"

"I received a telegram," he said gravely, "from Governor Barabásh" (the governor of the territory of the Trans-Baikál in which the mines of Karáa are situated) "saying that you were not to be allowed to see the political prison, and, of course, it was the governor's intention that you should not see the political convicts."

"You did not tell me so," I replied. "If you had told me that you had received such a telegram from the governor, it would have had great weight with me. I cannot remember that you ever intimated to me that I could not visit the members of the free command."

"I did not know that you were thinking of such a thing," he rejoined. "You said nothing about it. However," he continued, after a moment's pause, "it is Captain Nikólin's affair; he has the politicals in charge. All that I have to do is to warn you that you are acting imprudently and running a great risk."

I then explained to Major Pótulof frankly why I had said nothing to him about my intentions, and why I had taken advantage of his absence to carry them into effect. If I had said to him beforehand that I wished or intended to see the political convicts, he would have been obliged either to approve or to disapprove. If he had disapproved, I, as his guest, should have been bound in honor to respect his wishes and authority; while, if he had approved, he would have incurred a responsibility for my illegal action that I did not wish to throw upon him. I admitted knowledge of the fact that my intercourse with the politicals would not have been permitted if it had been foreseen, and told him that my only reasons for making their acquaintance secretly

in the way I had were first, to avoid interference, and secondly, to relieve him as far as possible from any suspicion of complicity. "Nobody now," I said, "can accuse you of having had anything to do with it. You were not here, and it is perfectly evident that I waited for the opportunity that your absence gave me." My explanation seemed to mollify him a little, and his old cordial manner gradually returned; but he warned me again that secret intercourse with political convicts, if I continued it, would almost certainly get me into trouble.

An hour or two after breakfast I was surprised and a little startled by the sudden reappearance of Captain Nikólin, the gendarme commandant of the political prison. He desired to see Major Pótulof on business, and they were closeted together for half or three-quarters of an hour in the major's writing-room. I was, at the time, in another part of the house trying to write up my notes; but Mr. Frost was at work upon a crayon portrait of the major's children in the drawing-room, off which the writing-room opened. At the first opportunity after Captain Nikólin's departure Mr. Frost came to me in some anxiety and whispered to me that he had accidentally overheard a part of the conversation between Captain Nikólin and Major Pótulof in the writing-room, and that it indicated trouble. It related to my intercourse with the political convicts, and turned upon the question of searching our baggage and examining my papers and note-books. As Mr. Frost understood it, Captain Nikólin insisted that such an investigation was proper and necessary, while Major Pótulof defended us, deprecated the proposed search, and tried to convince the gendarme officer that it would be injudicious to create such a scandal as an examination of our baggage would cause. The discussion closed with the significant remark from Nikólin that if the search were not made in Kará it certainly would be made somewhere else. Mr. Frost seemed to be much alarmed, and I was not a little troubled myself. I did not so much fear a search,—at least while we re-

mained in Major Pótulof's house,—but what I did fear was being put upon my word of honor by Major Pótulof himself as to the question whether I had any letters from the political convicts. I thought it extremely probable that he would come to me at the first opportunity and say to me good-humoredly, "George Ivánovich, Captain Nikólin has discovered your relations with the political convicts; he knows that you spent with them the greater part of one night, and he thinks that you may have letters from them. He came here this morning with a proposition to search your baggage. Of course, as you are my guests, I defended you and succeeded in putting him off; but I think under the circumstances it is only fair you should assure me, on your word of honor, that you have no such letters."

In such an exigency as that I should have to do one of two things—either lie outright, upon my word of honor, to the man in whose house I was a guest, or else betray people who had trusted me, and for whom I had already come to feel sincere sympathy and affection. Either alternative was intolerable—unthinkable—and yet I must decide upon some course of action at once. The danger was imminent, and I could not bring myself to face either of the alternatives upon which I should be forced if put upon my word of honor. I might perhaps have had courage enough to run the risk, so far as my own papers were concerned, but I knew that the letters in my possession, if discovered, would send Miss Armfeldt and all the other writers back into prison; would leave poor, feeble Mrs. Armfeldt alone in a penal settlement with a new sorrow; and would lead to a careful examination of all my papers, and thus bring misfortune upon scores of exiles and officers in other parts of Siberia who had furnished me with documentary materials. All the rest of that day I was in a fever of anxiety and irresolution. I kept, so far as possible, out of Major Pótulof's way; gave him no opportunity to speak to me alone; went to bed early on plea of a headache; and spent a wretched and sleepless night trying to decide upon a

course of action. I thought of a dozen different methods of concealing the letters, but concealment would not meet the emergency. If put upon my word of honor I should have to admit that I had them, or else lie in the most cowardly and treacherous way. I did not dare to mail them, since all the mail matter from the house passed through Major Pótulof's hands, and by giving them to him I might precipitate the very inquiries I wished to avoid. At last, just before daybreak, I decided to destroy them. I had no opportunity, of course, to consult the writers, but I felt sure that they would approve my action if they could know all the circumstances. It was very hard to destroy letters upon which those unfortunate people had hung so many hopes,—letters that I knew would have such priceless value to fathers, mothers, sisters, and brothers in Russia,—but there was nothing else to be done. The risk of keeping them had become too great to be justifiable.

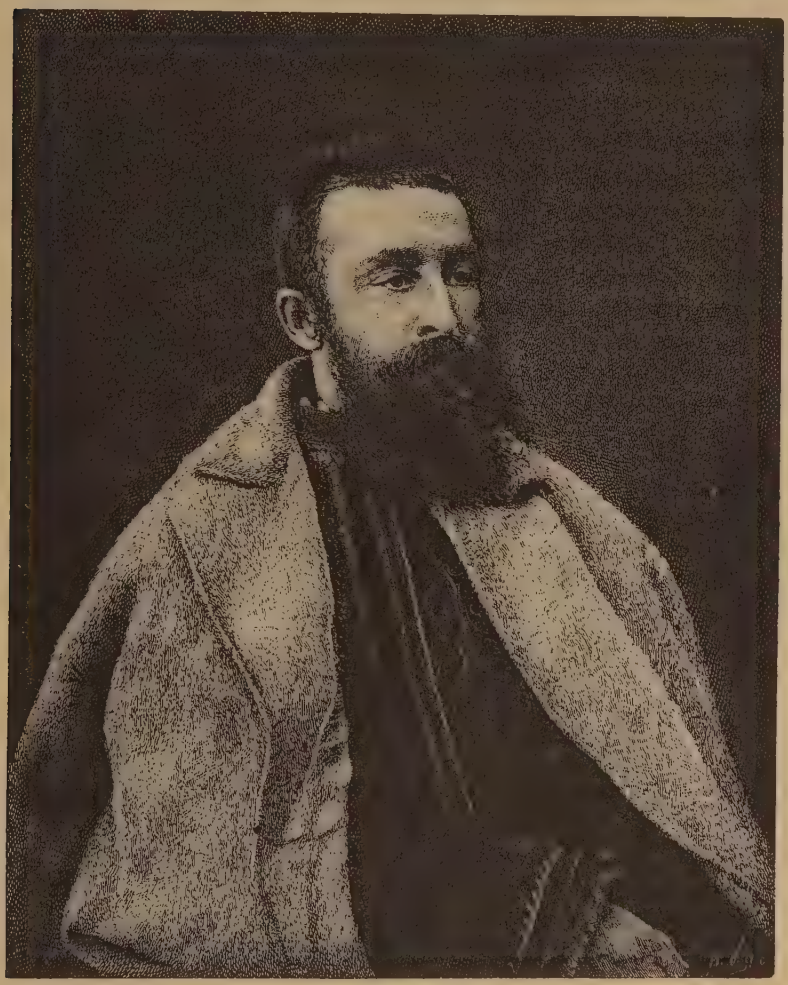
As soon as I had come to a decision, I was confronted by the question, "How are the letters to be destroyed?" Since the discovery of my secret relations with the political convicts I had been more closely watched than ever. My room had no door that could be closed, but was separated from the hall, and from Major Pótulof's sitting-room, merely by a light portière. Its large curtainless window was almost on a level with the ground, and an armed sentry, who stood night and day at the front entrance of the house, could see through it. If I tore the letters into small bits, they might be found and pieced together. If I burned them, the odor of the burning paper would be at once diffused through the house; and, besides that, I was likely to be caught in the act, either by the sentry, or by Major Pótulof himself, who, on one pretext or another, was constantly coming into my room without knock or announcement. There happened to be in the room a large brick oven, and about half an hour after I got up that morning a soldier came in to make a fire in it. The thought at once occurred to me that by watching for a favorable opportu-

nity, when Major Pótulof was talking with Mr. Frost in the sitting-room and the sentry was out of sight, I could throw the letters unobserved into this fire. As I walked out into the hall to see that the coast was clear there, I noiselessly unlatched the iron door of the oven and threw it ajar. Then returning and assuring myself that the sentry was not in a position to look through the window, I tossed the letters quickly into the oven upon a mass of glowing coals. Five minutes later there was not a trace of them left. I then erased or put into cipher many of the names of persons in my note-books and prepared myself, as well as I could, for a search.

There were two things in my personal experience at the mines of Karâ that I now particularly regret, and one of them is the burning of these letters. I did not see the political convicts again, I had no opportunity to explain to them the circumstances under which I acted, and explanations, even if I could make them, are now, in many cases, too late. Miss Nathalie Armfeldt died of prison consumption at the mines a little more than a year after I bade her good-by; her old mother soon followed her to the grave, and the letters that I destroyed may have been the last that they had an opportunity to write. I was not put upon my word of honor, I was not searched, and I might have carried those letters safely to their destination, as I afterward carried many others.

The next unfortunate thing in my Karâ experience was my failure to see Dr. Orest E. Véimar, one of the most distinguished political convicts in the free command, who, at the time of our visit, was dying of prison consumption. He was a surgeon, about thirty-five years of age, and resided, before his exile, in a large house of his own on the Névski Prospékt near the Admiralty Place in St. Petersburg. He was a man of wealth and high social standing, occupied an official position in the medical department of the Ministry of the Interior, and was, at one time, a personal friend of her Majesty, the present Empress. He was

in charge of her field-hospital throughout the Russo-Turkish war of 1877–78, was made a cavalier of the order of St. Anne for distinguished services in that campaign, received



DR. VÉIMAR.

the cross of Vladímir and the cross of Stánislaus "with swords" for gallantry on the field of battle, and was greatly beloved by General Gurkó, with whom he made the passage of the Balkáns.

He was arrested in St. Petersburg on April 2, 1879, and was thrown into one of the casemates of the fortress of Petropávlovsk. He lay there, in the strictest solitary confinement, until May, 1880—almost a year—and was then tried by court-martial upon the charge of political conspiracy. He pleaded not guilty, and declared that he had never had any relations with the revolutionary party; but he was convicted, nevertheless, upon fragmentary and misinterpreted circumstantial evidence, and condemned to fifteen years of penal servitude with deprivation of all civil rights and banishment to Siberia for life.[1] At the time of his trial the London *Times*, in a column editorial upon his case, said:

Our correspondent at St. Petersburg, in a dispatch we publish this morning, telegraphs the sentences passed yesterday on the prisoners charged with participation in the Nihilist conspiracy. Western observers can see in these state trials at St. Petersburg nothing but a shameful travesty of justice. The whole of these proceedings are an example of the way in which any one can govern by the aid of a state of siege. Military justice has had, as a rule, the merit of being sharp and sudden, but the military justice of the Russian courts has been as cruel in its dilatoriness as grossly illogical in its methods and terribly severe in its sentences. . . . Among the accused who were condemned yesterday, Dr. Véimar was in every way a man of whom his country seemed to have reason to be proud. He is in personal bearing a gallant gentleman. As a physician he has devoted his time and skill to the service of his suffering countrymen. He is (or was till yesterday, for to-day he is a drudge in the deadly mines) decorated with Russian and Roumanian orders, and with the medal for the Turkish war. He was with the troops who crossed the Balkans under Gurkó—a splendid feat of arms. The charges against this gentleman, the way in which the case was got up and pressed, would seem exaggerated in the wildest burlesque. The humors of injustice were never carried so far, if

[1] The official report of the trial of Dr. Véimar, and a number of other political offenders arraigned with him, will be found in the St. Petersburg newspaper *Gólos* for May, 1880, numbers 133–138. It was the opinion of all the officers of the exile administration who knew Dr. Véimar in Siberia that he was an innocent man unjustly condemned. Major Pótulof and Colonel Nóvikof expressed this belief to me very strongly.

we may trust the reports of the trial, by Bunyan's *Mr. Justice Hategood* or Rabelais's *Grippeminaud*. . . . Witnesses were brought forward to speak to the character of Dr. Véimar. Their testimony was a shower of praises, both as to his moral character and his bravery in war. This was inconvenient for the prosecution. Supposing the charges against Dr. Véimar true, it would appear that an exemplary citizen so despaired of the condition of his country that he conspired with miscreants like Solivióf and aided other dastardly assassins. It might have been surmised that the prosecution would bring evidence to damage the character of the accused, or at least to show that the praise heaped on him was undeserved. Nothing of the sort. The prosecutor said, "Gentlemen, I could have produced a series of witnesses whose testimony would have been quite the reverse. Unfortunately, all of them are absent." A military court could hardly avoid taking the word of the presiding general, but the whole proceeding, the whole conception of testimony and justice, are only to be paralleled in the burlesque trial witnessed by Alice in Mr. Carroll's fairy tale. . . . No case could bear more direct evidence to the terrible condition of Russian society and Russian justice. Either a man who seems to have been an exemplary citizen in other respects was driven by despotism into secret and dastardly treason, or Dr. Véimar is falsely condemned and unjustly punished. In either alternative, if the reports of his trial are correct, that trial was a scandal even to military law.

After sentence had been pronounced, Dr. Véimar was taken back to the fortress, and lay there, in what is known as "the penal servitude section," for nine months more. The dampness and bad sanitary condition of his cell finally broke down his health, and in February, 1881, he was found to be suffering from pleurisy and scurvy, and was removed to the House of Preliminary Detention. At last, in August, 1881, after more than two years of solitary confinement, he was sent, still sick, to the mines of Kará.

The Crown Princess Dagmár (now the Empress), whose hospital Dr. Véimar had managed during the Russo-Turkish war, took a deep personal interest in him, and was a firm believer in his innocence; but even she could not save him. When she came to the throne, however, as Empress, in

1881, she sent Colonel Nord to the mines of Karâ to see Dr. Véimar and offer him his freedom upon condition that he give his word of honor not to engage in any activity hostile to the Government. Dr. Véimar replied that he would not so bind himself while he was in ignorance of the state of affairs under the new Tsar (Alexander III.). If the Government would allow him to return to St. Petersburg, on parole or under guard, and see what the condition of Russia then was, he would give them a definite answer to their proposition; that is, he would accept freedom upon the terms offered, or he would go back to the mines. He would not, however, bind himself to anything until he had had an opportunity to ascertain how Russia was then being governed. Colonel Nord had a number of interviews with him, and tried in every way to shake his resolution, but without avail.

When Mr. Frost and I reached the mines of Karâ, Dr. Véimar had been released from prison on a ticket of leave, but was dying of consumption brought on by the intolerable conditions of Siberian prison life. The political convicts wished and proposed to take me to see him the night that I was at Miss Armfeldt's house, but they represented him as very weak, hardly able to speak aloud, and likely at any moment to die; and after I saw the effect that my sudden appearance produced upon Miss Armfeldt and the other politicals who were comparatively well, I shrank from inflicting upon a dying man, at midnight, such a shock of surprise and excitement. I had occasion afterward bitterly to regret my lack of resolution. Dr. Véimar died before I had another opportunity to see him, and six months later, when I returned to St. Petersburg on my way home from Siberia, I received a call from a cultivated and attractive young woman to whom, at the time of his banishment, he was engaged. She had heard that I was in Karâ when her betrothed died, and she had come to me hoping that I had brought her a letter, or at least some farewell message from him. She was making preparations, in November of

the previous year, to undertake a journey of four thousand miles alone, in order to join him at the mines and marry him, when she received a telegram from Captain Nikólin briefly announcing his death. Although more than six months had elapsed since that time, she had heard nothing else. Neither Dr. Véimar before his death, nor his convict friends after his death, had been permitted to write to her, and upon me she had hung her last hopes. How hard it was for me to tell her that I *might* have seen him—that I *might* have brought her, from his death-bed, one last assurance of love and remembrance,—but that I had not done so, the reader can perhaps imagine. I have had some sad things to do in my life, but a sadder duty than this never was laid upon me.

I afterward spent a whole evening with her at her house. She related to me the story of Dr. Véimar's heroic and self-sacrificing life, read me letters that he had written to her from battlefields in Bulgaria, and finally, with a face streaming with tears, brought out and showed to me the most sacred and precious relic of him that she had—a piece of needlework that he had made in his cell at the mines, and had succeeded in smuggling through to her as a little present and a token of his continued remembrance and love. It was a strip of coarse cloth, such as that used for convict shirts, about three inches wide and nearly fifty feet in length, embroidered from end to end in tasteful geometrical patterns with the coarsest and cheapest kind of colored linen thread.

"Mr. Kennan," she said to me, trying in vain to choke down her sobs, "imagine the thoughts that have been sewn into that piece of embroidery!"

We remained at the mines of Kará four or five days after our last visit to the house of the Armfeldts, but as we were constantly under close surveillance, we could accomplish nothing. All that there is left for me to do, therefore, is to throw into systematic form the information that I obtained there, and to give a few chapters

from the long and terrible history of the Karâ penal establishment.[1]

The Russian Government began sending state criminals to the mines of Karâ in small numbers as early as 1873, but it did not make a regular practice of so doing until 1879. Most of the politicals condemned to penal servitude before the latter date were held either in the "penal-servitude section" of the Petropávlovsk fortress at St. Petersburg, or in the solitary confinement cells of the central convict prison at Kharkóf. As the revolutionary movement, however, grew more and more serious and widespread, and the prisons of European Russia became more and more crowded with political offenders, the Minister of the Interior began to transfer the worst class of hard-labor state criminals to the mines of Karâ, where they were imprisoned in buildings intended originally for common felons.[2] In December, 1880, there were about fifty political convicts in the Karâ prisons, while nine men who had finished their term of probation were living outside the prison walls in

[1] Nearly all of the statements made in this and the following chapter have been carefully verified, and most of them rest upon unimpeachable official testimony. There may be trifling errors in some of the details, but, in the main, the story can be proved, even in a Russian court of justice. The facts with regard to Colonel Kononóvich and his connection with the Karâ prisons and mines were obtained partly from political convicts and partly from officials in Karâ, Chíta, Irkútsk, and St. Petersburg. The letter in which Kononóvich resigned his position as governor of the Karâ penal establishment is still on file in the Ministry of the Interior, and all the circumstances of his retirement are known, not only to the political convicts, but to many of the officials with whom I have talked. I regret that I am restrained by prudential and other considerations from citing my authorities. I could greatly strengthen my case by showing—as I might show—that I obtained my information from persons fully competent to furnish it, and persons whose positions were a sufficient guarantee of impartiality.

[2] The political prison was not in existence at that time, and the state criminals were distributed among the common-criminal prisons, where they occupied what were called the "secret" or solitary-confinement cells. At a somewhat later period an old detached building in Middle Karâ was set apart for their accommodation, and most of them lived together there in a single large *kámera*. They were treated in general like common convicts, were required to work every day in the gold placers, and at the expiration of their term of probation were released from confinement and enrolled in the free command.

little huts and cabins of their own. Most of the male prisoners were forced to go with the common felons to the gold placers; but as the hours of labor were not unreasonably long, they regarded it as a pleasure and a privilege, rather than a hardship, to get out of the foul atmosphere of their prison cells and work six or eight hours a day in the sunshine and the open air.

The officer in command of the Kará penal establishment at that time was Colonel Kononóvich, a highly educated, humane, and sympathetic man, who is still remembered by many a state criminal in Eastern Siberia with gratitude and respect. He was not a revolutionist, nor was he in sympathy with revolution; but he recognized the fact that many of the political convicts were refined and cultivated men and women, who had been exasperated and frenzied by injustice and oppression, and that although their methods might be ill-judged and mistaken, their motives, at least, were disinterested and patriotic. He treated them, therefore, with kindness and consideration, and lightened so far as possible for every one of them the heavy burden of life. There were in the Kará prisons at that time several state criminals who, by order of the gendarmerie and as a disciplinary punishment, had been chained to wheelbarrows.[1] Colonel Kononóvich could not bear to see men of high character and education subjected to so degrading and humiliating a punishment; and although he could not free them from it without authority from St. Petersburg, he gave directions that they should be released from their wheelbarrows whenever he made a visit of inspection to

1 This is a punishment still authorized by law, and one still inflicted upon convicts who are serving out life sentences. The prisoner is fastened to a small miner's wheelbarrow by a chain, attached generally to the middle link of his leg-fetter. This chain is long enough to give him some freedom of movement, but he cannot walk for exercise, nor cross his cell, without trundling his wheelbarrow before him. Even when he lies down to sleep, the wheelbarrow remains attached to his feet. Four politicals have been chained to wheelbarrows at Kará, namely: Popko, Berezniúk, Fomíchef, and Shchedrín. The last of them was not released until 1884. Whether or not any have been thus punished since that time I do not know.

the prison, so that at least he should not be compelled to see them in that situation. The humane disposition and sensitiveness to human suffering of which this is an illustration characterized all the dealings of Colonel Kononóvich with the political convicts; and so long as he was permitted to treat them with reasonable kindness and consideration he did so treat them, because he recognized the fact that their life was hard enough at best. Late in the year 1880, however, the Minister of the Interior began to issue a series of orders intended, apparently, to restrict the privileges of the state criminals and render their punishment more severe. They were forbidden, in the first place, to have any written communication whatever with their relatives. To such of them as had wives, children, fathers, or mothers in European Russia, this of itself was a terrible as well as an unjustifiable privation. Then they were forbidden to work in the gold placers, and were thus deprived of the only opportunity they had to see the outside world, to breathe pure, fresh air, and to strengthen and invigorate their bodies with exercise. Finally, about the middle of December, 1880, the governor received an order to abolish the free command, send all its members back into prison, half shave their heads, and put them again into chains and leg-fetters.[1] Colonel Kononóvich regarded this order as unnecessarily and even brutally severe, and tried in every way to have it rescinded or modified. His efforts, however, were unavailing, and

[1] All of these orders were issued while the Liberal Lóris-Mélikof was Minister of the Interior, and I have never been able to get any explanation of the inconsistency between his general policy towards the Liberal party and his treatment of condemned state criminals. Some of the officials whom I questioned in Siberia said without hesitation it was the minister's intention to make the life of the political convicts harder; while others thought that he acted without full information and upon the assumption that modern politicals were no more deserving of sympathy than were the Decembrists of 1825. The Decembrist conspirators —although high nobles—were harshly treated, therefore Nihilists should be harshly treated. Many of the political exiles whom I met in Siberia regarded Lóris-Mélikof's professions of sympathy with the Liberal and reforming party as insincere and hypocritical; but my own impression is that he acted in this case upon somebody's advice, without giving the matter much thought or consideration.

on the 28th of December he called the members of the free command together, read the order to them, told them that he had failed to obtain any modification of it, but said that he would, on his own personal responsibility, allow them three days more of freedom in which to settle up their domestic affairs. On the morning of January 1, 1881, they must report at the prison. To all the members of the free command this order was a terrible blow. For two years they had been living in comparative freedom in their own little cabins, many of them with their wives and children, who had made a journey of five thousand miles across Siberia in order to join them. At three days' warning they were to be separated from their families, sent back into prison, and put again into chains and leg-fetters. Some of them were leaving their wives and children alone and unprotected in a penal settlement, some of them were broken in health and could not expect to live long in the close confinement of a prison *kámera*, and all of them looked forward with dread to the chains, leg-fetters, foul air, vermin, and miseries innumerable of prison life.

In the free command, at that time, was living a young lawyer, thirty-three years of age, named Eugene Semyónofski. He was the son of a well-known surgeon in Kiev, and had been condemned to penal servitude for having been connected in some way with the "underground" revolutionary journal *Onward*. He was a man of high character and unusual ability, had had a university training, and at the time of his arrest was practising law in St. Petersburg. After four or five years of penal servitude at the mines his health gave way, and in 1879 he was released from prison and enrolled in the free command. At the last meeting of the political convicts and their wives, on New Year's Eve, it was noticed that Semyónofski seemed to be greatly depressed, and that when they parted he bade his comrades good-by with unusual manifestations of emotion and affection. About two o'clock that morning Mr. Charúshin, a political convict in whose little cabin Semyónofski was

living, was awakened by the report of a pistol, and rushing into the room of Semyónofski found that the latter had shot himself through the head. He was still living, but he did not recover consciousness, and died in about an hour. On the table lay a letter addressed to his father, with a note to Charúshin asking him to forward it, if possible, to its destination. The letter was as follows:

MINES OF KARÁ,

Night of December 31, January 1, 1880–1.

MY DEAR FATHER: I write you just after my return from watching the old year out and the new year in with all my comrades. We met, this New Year, under melancholy and disheartening circumstances. You have probably received a letter from the wife of one of my comrades, whom I requested to inform you that we had been forbidden thenceforth to write letters to any one—even our parents. Senseless and inhuman as that prohibition was, there awaited us something much worse—something that I knew nothing about when that letter was written. Ten days or so after we received notice of the order forbidding us to write letters, we were informed that we were all to be returned to prison and confined in chains and leg-fetters. There are nine men of us, namely: Shishkó, Charúshin, Kviatkóvski, Uspénski, Soyúzof, Bogdánof, Teréntief, Tévtul, and I; and we have all been living about two years in comparative freedom outside the prison. We expected something of this kind from the very day that we heard of the order of Lóris-Mélikof prohibiting our correspondence; because there was in that order a paragraph which led us to fear that we should not be left in peace. To-morrow we are to go back to prison. But for the faith that Colonel Kononóvich has in us we should have been arrested and imprisoned as soon as the order was received; but he trusted us and gave us a few days in which to settle up our affairs. We have availed ourselves of this respite to meet together, for the last time in freedom, to watch the old year out and the new year in. I shall avail myself of it for yet another purpose. I do not know whether the carrying out of that purpose will, or will not, be a betrayal of the confidence that Colonel Kononóvich has reposed in us; but even if I knew that it would be such a betrayal I should still carry out my purpose.

It may be that some one who reads the words "they are going back to prison" will compare us to sheep, submissively presenting their throats to the knife of the butcher; but such a comparison

would be a grievously mistaken one. The only means of escape from such a situation as ours is in flight—and how and whither could we fly, in a temperature of thirty-five degrees below zero, and without any previous preparation for such an undertaking? The reason why no preparations have been made you know, if you received the letter that I wrote you last August.

My own personal determination was to attempt an escape if the order for our return to prison should come in the spring, when it would be possible to escape, and to do it, not on the spur of the moment, but after serious preparation. It has not, however, happened so. In the meantime I feel that my physical strength is failing day by day. I know that my weakness must soon have its effect upon my mental powers, and that I am threatened with the danger of becoming a complete imbecile—and all this while I am living outside the prison. The question arises, what would become of me *in* prison? My whole life rests on the hope of returning some time to Russia and serving, with all my soul, the cause of right and justice to which I long ago devoted myself; but how can that cause be served by a man who is mentally and physically wrecked? When the hope of rendering such service is taken away from me, what is there left? Personal self-justification? But before the moment comes for anything like complete satisfaction of that desire, they can put me ten times to the torture. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that there is no longer anything to live for—that I have earned the right, at last, to put an end to sufferings that have become aimless and useless. I have long been tired—deathly tired—of life; and only the thought of home has restrained me, hitherto, from self-destruction. I know that I am about to cause terrible grief, Sásha,[1] to you, and to all who love me; but is not your love great enough to forgive the suicide of a man tortured to the last extremity? Understand that, for God's sake! I have been literally tortured to death during these last years. For the sake of all that you hold dear, I beseech you to forgive me! You must know that my last thoughts are of you—that if I had a little more strength I would live out my life, if only to save you from further suffering; but my strength is exhausted. There is nothing left for me to do but to go insane or die; and the latter alternative is, after all, better than the former.

Good-by, forever, my dear, kind, well-remembered father and friend! Good-by, Sásha, and you my younger brother, whom I

1 "Sásha" was Semyónofski's brother Alexander

know so little. Remember that it is better to die, even as I die, than to live without being able to feel one's self a man of principle and honor.

Once more, good-by! Do not think ill of your unhappy son and brother, who, even in his unhappiness, finds consolation.

EUGENE.

All that was mortal of Eugene Semyónofski now lies in the political convicts' burying-ground on a lonely hill known as "The Convict's Head" in Eastern Siberia. The unpainted wooden cross that marks his grave will soon decay, and then nothing will remain to show where lie the ashes of a man whose brilliant talents, high standards of duty, and intense moral earnestness might have made him an honor to his country and an invaluable worker in the cause of freedom and humanity.

Among the most gifted and attractive of the women who were in penal servitude at the mines of Karà when the free command was sent back to prison was Márya Pávlovna Kavaléfskaya—born Vorontsóf—who was arrested with Miss Armfeldt in Kiev in 1879. She was the daughter of Paul Vorontsóf, a landed proprietor [*poméishchik*] in the south of Russia, and was the sister of Basil Vorontsóf, a well-known Russian political economist.[1] She had a liberal education, and was characterized as a girl by tenacity of purpose, generous feeling, and a sensitive nervous organization. Her brother's interest in political economy led her at a comparatively early age to study the problems presented by Russian life, and even before her marriage she made an attempt, by opening a peasant school, to do something to improve the condition of the great ignorant mass of the Russian common people. At the age of twenty-two or twenty-three she married a teacher in one of the gymnasia or high schools of Kiev named Kavaléfski—a man of culture and refinement, who at one time had been a mem-

[1] Mr. Vorontsóf is the author of "The Destiny of Capital in Russia," and of a large number of articles upon political economy in the Russian magazines *European Messenger*, *Annals of the Fatherland*, and *Russian Thought*.

MADAM KAVALÉFSKAYA.

ber of the city council of Odéssa, and who was generally respected and esteemed. They lived together happily and had one child—a little girl whom they named "Hallie."

I will not now attempt to trace the series of steps by which Madam Kavaléfskaya passed from the position of a

moderate liberal to the position of a revolutionist. After trying, again and again, by peaceful and legal methods, to remedy some of the evils that she saw about her, and after being opposed and thwarted at every step by the censorship of the press, the police, and the Russian bureaucratic system, she became satisfied that nothing could be done without a change in the existing form of government; and she therefore joined one of the secret revolutionary circles in Kiev. This circle was surprised and captured by the police in February, 1879, and Madam Kavaléfski was condemned as a revolutionist to thirteen years and four months of penal servitude, with exile to Siberia for life and deprivation of all civil rights. Professor Kavaléfskaya was not present at the meeting that was broken up by the police, and there was no proof that he had taken any active part in the revolutionary movement; but he was exiled by administrative process, nevertheless, to the little town of Minusínsk, in Eastern Siberia, nearly a thousand miles distant from the mines to which his wife was sent. Their little daughter Hallie was left in Kiev in the care of one of Madam Kavaléfskaya's sisters.

The long and terrible journey of nearly 5000 miles to the mines of Karâ, the separation from her husband and child, and the hardships and loneliness of penal servitude broke down Madam Kavaléfskaya's health and strength; and in the autumn of 1880 she began to show signs of mental alienation. She had been allowed, up to that time, to correspond with her family; and I happen to have in my possession a copy of one of the letters that she received from her little daughter Hallie, who was then at school in Kiev. I have not space to describe the way in which this letter, with other documents, was smuggled out of Madam Kavaléfskaya's cell and put into my hands; but I will quote it, in order to show how, by means of such letters, the bleeding wounds of the poor woman's life were kept open until her brain could no longer bear the torture. If you will imagine Madam Kavaléfskaya in penal servitude at the

mines of Kará, separated forever from her only child, and yet receiving from the latter such letters as this, you will understand, perhaps, how she was, at last, driven insane. To what extent the little girl Hallie realized the situation of her mother sufficiently appears from the naïve, childish letter that she wrote her. It is as follows:

MY DEARLY LOVED PRECIOUS MOTHER: I wish you could see how pleasant the weather is here. I walk out every day, all along the bank of the river, and I enjoy it so much! You ask me to tell you about the other children. Well, first, there is Sásha. He is rather fat and good-looking, and he has nice eyes; but I think he is spoiled by petting. Then there is Dúnia. She is not very pretty, but she is a nice girl and I like her very much. The baby is only a year old. He creeps all over the floor; but he can walk holding on to somebody's hand, and he can say 'Papa,' 'Mama,' and 'Niánya' [nurse]. I love him most of all.

I am getting along in my studies pretty well. In history I am 5, grammar 5, German 4, and French 5; but, my dear mother, I must give you some sad news. In arithmetic I could n't do the sum that was given me, and so was marked 3, and did n't get the reward, which I hoped so to get because I knew how it would please aunt and you.

My dear mother, it is terrible to think how far you are from me —but how glad I am that you love me so. When I grow up and have children I will love them as you love me, and as I love you. My dearest little mother, my darling, my soul, I love you so much!

HALLIE.

Imagine Madam Kavaléfskaya in penal servitude at the mines, five thousand miles from her home, in shaken health, with no hope of ever returning to European Russia, with little hope even of living out her thirteen-year sentence, and in receipt of such a letter as this from her only child! I have often pictured to myself the contrast between what the child thought was "sad news"—that she could not do her sum in arithmetic—and the awful tragedy in the life of the mother.

In 1881, soon after the return of the free command to prison, Madam Kavaléfskaya went insane, shrieked con-

stantly, broke the windows of her cell, and became so violent that it was necessary to put her into a strait-jacket. A short time afterward, however, upon the intercession of a humane officer—I think of Colonel Kononóvich himself—she was permitted to join her husband in Minusínsk; and there, under more favorable conditions of life, she recovered her reason. About a year later she was regarded as sane enough to be again subjected to torture, and she was therefore returned to the mines. When she became once more "insubordinate" and unmanageable there, she was brought back to the Irkútsk prison, where, with Mesdames Róssikova, Kutitónskaya, and Bogomólets, she engaged in a hunger-strike that lasted sixteen days, and that brought all four of the women very near to death.[1] Some time in 1887 Madam Kavaléfskaya was sent for the third time to the mines, and in November, 1889, after the flogging to death of Madam Sigída, she committed suicide by taking poison.

When Madam Kavaléfskaya went insane in 1881, Colonel Kononóvich was still governor of the Karà penal establishment; the free command had just been returned to prison, and Semyónofski had just shot himself in the house of his friend Charúshin. Of course, Colonel Kononóvich was greatly shocked both by Semyónofski's suicide and by Madam Kavaléfskaya's insanity, but these were not the only tragedies that resulted from an enforcement of the Government's orders concerning the treatment of the political convicts. Soon after the self-destruction of Semyónofski, Uspénski, another political who had been sent back into prison, hanged himself in the prison bathhouse, while Ródin poisoned himself to death by drinking water in which he had soaked the heads of matches.

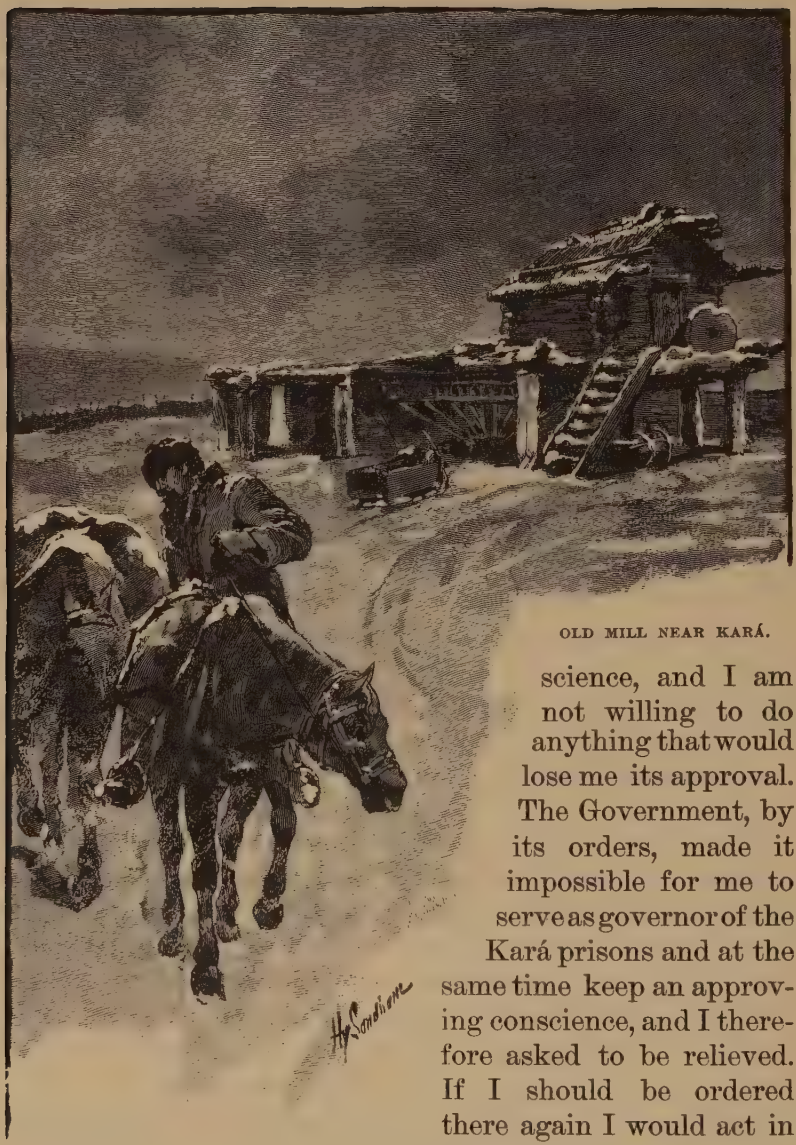
Colonel Kononóvich was too warm-hearted and sympathetic a man not to be profoundly moved by such terrible evidences of human misery. He determined to resign his position as governor of the Karà penal establishment,

[1] This hunger-strike was a protest against cruel treatment at the hands of the Irkútsk chief of police.

whatever might be the consequences; and in pursuance of this determination he wrote to the governor-general of Eastern Siberia and to the Minister of the Interior a very frank and bold letter, in which he said that he regarded the late instructions of the Government concerning the treatment of the political convicts as not only impolitic but cruel. If they wanted an officer who would treat the politicals in accordance with the spirit of such instructions, they had best send a hangman there. He, himself, was not a hangman; he could not enforce such orders without doing violence to all his feelings, and he must therefore ask to be relieved of his command. The resignation was accepted, and in the summer of 1881 Colonel Kononóvich left the mines of Kará, and some time afterwards returned to St. Petersburg. As he passed through Irkútsk he had an interview with Governor-general Anúchin, in the course of which the latter said to him, rather coldly and contemptuously, "Of course, Colonel Kononóvich, a man holding such views as you do could not be expected to act as governor of the Kará prisons and mines, and I doubt whether such a man can hold any position whatever in the Government service."

"Very well," replied Kononóvich, "then I will get out of it."

Soon after his arrival in St. Petersburg, Colonel Kononóvich had an interview with Mr. Dúrnovo, Assistant Minister of the Interior, in the course of which he said to the latter, "I did not relax any necessary discipline at Kará, nor did I violate or neglect to enforce any law. If you want to have good order among the political convicts at the mines, and to have your Government respected, you will have to send there men with convictions like mine. That I had no selfish aims in view you can understand from the fact that the course I pursued was dangerous to me. You have probably received not a few accusations made against me by other officers. I am not afraid of accusations, nor of opposition, but I do fear my own con-



OLD MILL NEAR KARÁ.

science, and I am not willing to do anything that would lose me its approval. The Government, by its orders, made it impossible for me to serve as governor of the Karà prisons and at the same time keep an approving conscience, and I therefore asked to be relieved. If I should be ordered there again I would act in precisely the same way."

The subsequent history of the Karà penal establishment must have made Mr. Dúrnovo think many times of these brave, frank words.

I have not been able to speak favorably of many Siberian prisons, nor to praise many Siberian officials; but it affords me pleasure to say that of Colonel Kononóvich I heard little that was not good. Political convicts, honest officers, and good citizens everywhere united in declaring that he was a humane, sympathetic, and warm-hearted man, as well as a fearless, intelligent, and absolutely incorruptible official. Nearly all the improvement that has been made in the Kará penal establishment within the past quarter of a century was made during Colonel Kononóvich's term of service as governor. In view of these facts I regret to have to say that he was virtually driven out of Siberia by the worst and most corrupt class of Russian bureaucratic officials. He was called "weak" and "sentimental"; he was accused of being a "socialist"; he was said to be in sympathy with the views of the political convicts; and the *isprávnik* of Nérchinsk openly boasted, in the official club of that city, that he would yet "send Colonel Kononóvich to the province of Yakútsk with a yellow diamond on his back." How ready even high officers of the Siberian administration were to entertain the most trivial charges against him may be inferred from the following anecdote. During the last year of his service at Kará there came to the mines a political convict, hardly out of his teens, named Bíbikof. As a consequence of long-continued suffering and ill-treatment on the road, this young man was as wild, suspicious, and savage as a trapped wolf. He seemed to regard all the world as his enemies, and glared at every officer as if he expected a blow, was half afraid of it, but was prepared to die fighting. Colonel Kononóvich received him courteously and kindly; sent the wife of one of the political exiles to him with clean fresh underclothing; attended generally to his physical needs, and finally said to him, "Remember that nobody here will insult you or ill-treat you." The young convict was greatly surprised by such a reception, and in a letter that he subsequently wrote to a friend in European Russia he said, "I am glad to know, from the

little acquaintance I have had with Kononóvich, that a Russian colonel is not necessarily a beast." This letter fell into the hands of the police in European Russia, was forwarded through the Ministry of the Interior to General Ilyashévich, the governor of the Trans-Baikál, and was sent by that officer to Colonel Kononóvich with a request for an "explanation." It seemed to be regarded as documentary evidence that the governor of the Karáprisons was on suspiciously friendly terms with the political convicts. Kononóvich paid no attention to the communication. Some months later he happened to visit Chíta on business, and Governor Ilyashévich, in the course of a conversation about other matters, said to him, "By the way, Colonel Kononóvich, you have never answered a letter that I wrote you asking for an explanation of something said about you in a letter from one of the political convicts in your command. Did you receive it?"

"Yes," replied Kononóvich, "I received it; but what kind of answer did you look for? What explanation could I give? Did you expect me to excuse myself because somebody regarded me as a human being and not a beast? Was I to say that the writer of the letter was mistaken in supposing me to be a human being—that in reality I was a beast, and that I had never given him or anybody else reason to suppose that a Russian colonel could be a human being?"

This presentation of the case rather confused the governor, who said that the demand for an explanation had been written by his assistant, that it had been stupidly expressed, and that after all the matter was not of much consequence. He then dropped the subject.

After resigning his position at the mines of Kará, Colonel Kononóvich, who was a Cossack officer, went to Nérchinsk, where he took command of the Cossack forces of the Trans-Baikál. He soon discovered that a small knot of officers, including the *isprávnik*, were engaged in selling immunity

from conscription—or, in other words, releasing, for two or three hundred *rúbles*, per capita, young men who had been legally drawn as conscripts and who should render military service. He undertook to bring the corrupt officials to justice; but they had strong and highly placed friends in Irkútsk, they trumped up a set of counter charges, packed the investigating commission with their own associates, and came very near sending Colonel Kononóvich to the province of Yakútsk "with a yellow diamond on his back," in fulfilment of the *isprávnik's* boast. Fortunately Kononóvich had influential friends in St. Petersburg. He telegraphed to them and to the Minister of the Interior, and finally succeeded in securing the appointment of another commission, in having the *isprávnik* and some of his confederates thrown into prison, and in obtaining documentary evidence of their guilt. The conspirators then caused his house to be set on fire in the middle of a cold winter night, and nearly burned him alive with all his family. He escaped in his night-clothing, and, as soon as he had gotten his wife and children out, rushed back to try to save the papers in the pending case against the *isprávnik*, but it was too late. He was driven out by smoke and flames, and most of the proofs were destroyed. Colonel Kononóvich then "shook his hand" against Siberia —to use a Russian expression—and went to St. Petersburg. He did not want to live any longer, he said, in a country where an honest man could not do his duty without running the risk of being burned alive. In St. Petersburg he was given another position, as representative on the general staff of the Cossack forces of the Trans-Baikál, and he lived there quietly until the summer of 1888, when he was promoted to the rank of general and appointed to command the largest and most important penal establishment in Siberia; namely, that on the island of Saghalín. This appointment is in the highest degree creditable to the Russian Government, and, taken in connection with the erection of

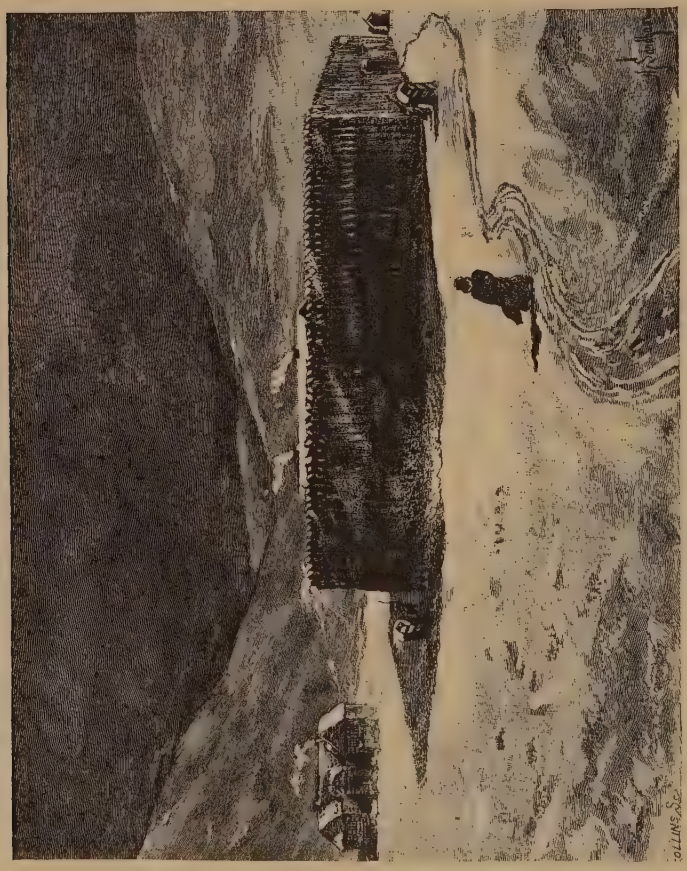
the new prison in Vérkhni Údinsk, furnishes a gratifying proof that the Tsar is not wholly indifferent to the sufferings of Siberian exiles and convicts. As long as General Kononóvich remains in command of the Saghalín prisons and mines there is every reason to believe that they will be intelligently, honestly, and humanely managed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HISTORY OF THE KARÁ POLITICAL PRISON

ALMOST the last work that Colonel Kononóvich accomplished at the mines of Kará was the erection of the new political prison near the Lower Diggings. Captain Nikólin would not allow me to inspect this building, nor would he allow Mr. Frost to photograph it; but from convicts who had been confined in it I obtained the plan on page 225 and the picture on page 226, and from memory Mr. Frost drew the sketch on page 224. In general type it differs little from the common-criminal prisons, but it is larger, better lighted, and more spacious than the latter, and is, in all respects, a more comfortable place of abode. It contains four *kámeras*, exclusive of the hospital, or lazaret, and in each of them there are three windows, a large table, a brick oven, and sleeping-platform accommodations for about twenty-five men. There are no beds, except in the lazaret, and all the bed-clothing that the prisoners have was purchased with their own money. Originally the palisade did not entirely inclose the building, and the prisoners could look out of their front windows across the Kará valley; but Governor-general Anúchin, on the occasion of one of his rare visits to the mines, disapproved of this arrangement, remarked cynically that "A prison is not a palace," and ordered that the stockade of high, closely set logs be so extended as to cut off the view from the windows, and completely shut the building in. It is hard to see in this order anything but a deliberate intention on the part of a cruel official to make the life of the political convicts as miserable

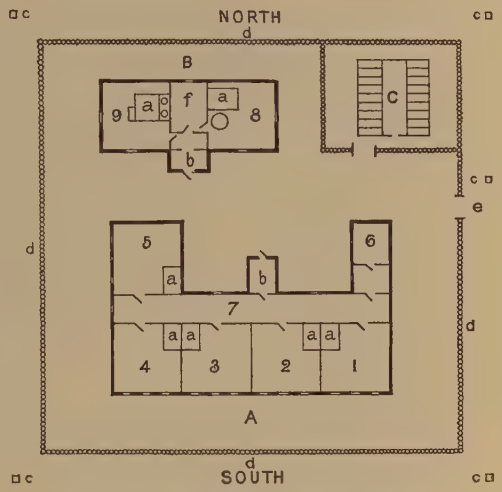
and intolerable as possible. Every common-criminal prison in Karâ, without exception, has windows that overlook the settlement or the valley; and every burglar and murderer in the whole penal establishment can see from his cell some-



THE KARÁ POLITICAL PRISON.

thing of the outside world. The political convicts, however, in the opinion of the governor-general, had no right to live in a "palace" from which they could see the green trees, the glimmer of the sunshine on the water, and the tender purple of the distant hills at sunset or at dawn. They must be shut up in a tight box; the fresh invigorating breeze

from the mountains must be prevented from entering their grated windows; and the sight of a human being not clothed in a turnkey's uniform must never gladden their weary, homesick eyes. I have wished many times that his Excellency Governor-general Anúchin might be shut up for one year in the political prison at the mines of Kará; that he might look out for 365 days upon the weather-beaten logs of a high stockade; that he might lie for 365 nights on a bare sleeping-platform infested with vermin; and that he might breathe, night and day, for fifty-two consecutive weeks, the air of a close *kámera*, saturated with the poisonous stench of an uncovered excrement-bucket. *Then* he might say to himself, with a more vivid realization of its meaning, "A prison is not a palace."

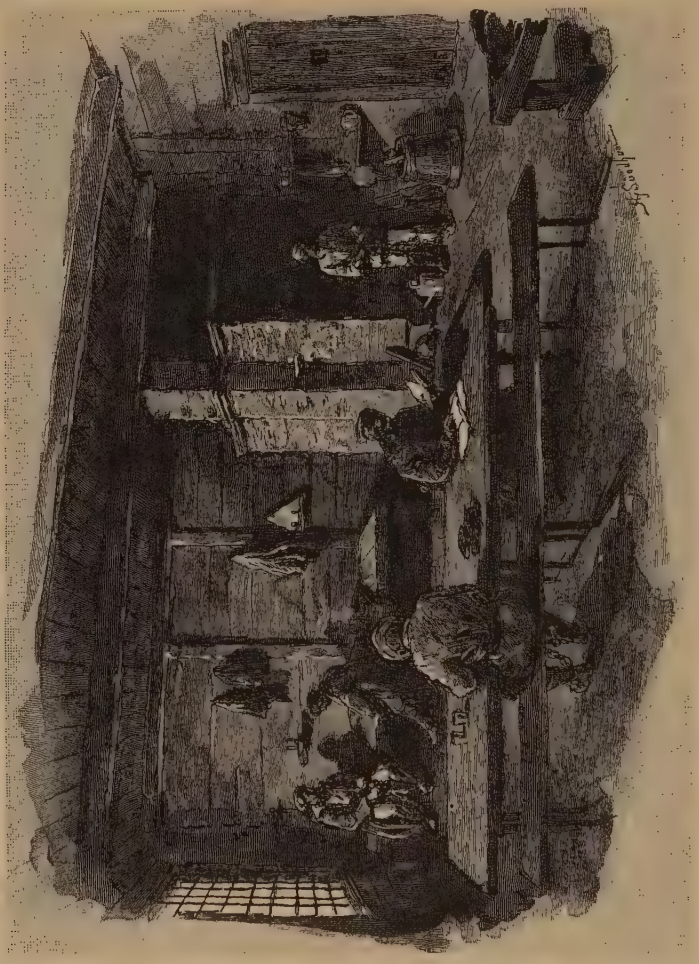


PLAN OF THE KARÁ POLITICAL PRISON.

A, Main Prison Building; B, Kitchen and Bath-house; C, Small Solitary-confinement cells, not now used; 1, 2, 3, 4, Large *kámera* or cells designated respectively by the prisoners as "Academia," "Dvorianka," "Yakutka," and "Kharchofka"; 5, *Kámera* used as a prison hospital, or lazaret; 6, Water-closet; 7, Main Corridor; 8, Bath-room; 9, Kitchen; a, Ovens; b, Entry-ways; c, Sentry-boxes; d, Stockade around prison buildings; e, Gate to prison yard; f, Bath-house dressing-room.

When Colonel Kononóvich, in 1881, resigned his position as governor of the Kará penal establishment, his place was taken by Major Pótulof, who had previously been connected in some official capacity with the prison administration of the Nérchinsk silver mines. Shortly after Pótulof assumed command, all of the male political convicts, who then numbered about one hundred, were transferred to the new political prison erected by Colonel Kononóvich at the

Lower Diggings, where they were divided into gangs of twenty-five men each and shut up in four large *kámeras*. Their life, as described in letters surreptitiously written by



INTERIOR OF A KÁMERA IN THE KARÁ POLITICAL PRISON.

some of them to their friends, was hard and hopeless, but not absolutely intolerable. They were allowed to exercise every day in the courtyard, they were permitted to receive small sums of money from their friends, they had in the prison a fairly good library consisting of books purchased

by them or sent to them from European Russia, and they could amuse themselves occasionally by working with carpenter's or blacksmith's tools in a small shop situated in one corner of the courtyard. On the other hand, they were living under very bad sanitary conditions; some of them were kept night and day in handcuffs and leg-fetters; two or three of them were chained to wheelbarrows; those who still had possession of their mental faculties were forced to listen constantly to the babbling or the raving of their insane comrades; they were no longer allowed to diversify their monotonous existence by work in the gold placers; they were deprived of the privilege of enrolment in the free command at the expiration of their terms of probation; they were forbidden to communicate with their relatives; and their whole world was bounded by the high serrated wall of the prison stockade. That their life was a terribly hard one seems to have been admitted, even by the most indifferent of Siberian officials. In March, 1882, Governor-general Anúchin made a report to the Tsar with regard to the state of affairs in Eastern Siberia, in the course of which he referred to the political convicts at Kará as follows:

In concluding this part of my report [upon the prisons and the exile system], I must offer, for the consideration of your Imperial Majesty, a few words concerning the state criminals now living in Eastern Siberia. On the 1st of January, 1882, they numbered in all 430 persons, as follows:

a. Sent to Siberia by decree of a court and now	
1. In penal servitude	123
2. In forced colonization	49
3. In assigned residences [*na zhityó*]	41
b. Sent to Siberia by administrative process and now	
1. In assigned residences [*na zhítelstvo*]	217
Total	430 [1]

1 It is a noteworthy fact, frankly admitted by the governor-general, that out of 430 political offenders banished to Eastern Siberia, 217 — or more than half — had been sent there without trial, and without even a pretense of judicial investigation. I submit this officially stated fact for the attentive consideration of the advocates of a Russo-American extradition treaty.

All of the state criminals belonging to the penal-servitude class are held at the Karâ gold mines under guard of a foot company of the Trans-Baikâl Cossacks consisting of two hundred men. The sending of these criminals to work with the common convicts in the gold placers is impossible.[1] To employ them in such work in isolation from the others is very difficult, on account of the lack of suitable working-places, their unfitness for hard physical labor, and the want of an adequate convoy. If to these considerations be added the fact that unproductive hard labor, such as that employed in other countries merely to subject the prisoner to severe physical exertion, is not practised with us, it will become apparent that we have no hard labor for this class of criminals to perform; and the local authorities who are in charge of them, and who are held to strict accountability for escapes, are compelled, by force of circumstances, to limit themselves to keeping such state criminals in prison under strict guard, employing them, occasionally, in work within the prison court, or not far from it. Such labor has not the character of penal servitude, but may rather be regarded as hygienic. Immunity from hard labor, however, does not render the lot of state criminals an easy one. On the contrary, complete isolation and constant confinement to their own limited circle make their life unbearable. . . . There have been a number of suicides among them, and within a few days one of them, Pózen, has gone insane. A number of others are in a mental condition very near to insanity. In accordance with an understanding that I have with the Ministry of the Interior, all sufferers from mental disorder will be removed, if possible, to hired quarters in the town of Chíta,[2] since there are in Siberia no regular

[1] The governor-general does not say why this was "impossible," nor does he try to explain the fact that although the politicals were constantly sent to the gold placers under Colonel Kononóvich's management, no evil results followed, and not a single attempt was made to escape.

[2] Up to the time of our visit to the mines, three years and a half later, this promised removal had not been made. Insane politicals were still living in the same *kámeras* with their sane comrades, and intensifying, by their presence, the misery of the latter's existence. In East-Siberian prisons generally we found little attention paid to the seclusion or care of demented convicts. In more than one place in the Trans-Baikâl we were startled, as we entered a crowded prison *kámera*, by some uncared-for lunatic, who sprang suddenly towards us with a wild cry or with a burst of hysterical laughter. The reasons for this state of affairs are given, in part, by the governor-general. There is not an insane asylum in the whole country, and it is easier and cheaper to make the prison comrades of a lunatic take care of him than to keep him in seclusion and provide him with an attendant. For educated

asylums for the insane, and all the existing institutions of that kind in European Russia are full.[1]

It is a fact worthy, perhaps, of remark that the life of the political convicts at Kará, which Governor-general Anúchin describes as "unbearable," was made unbearable by the direct and deliberate action of the Government itself. Anúchin caused to be erected in front of the prison windows the high stockade that hid from the prisoners the whole outside world and turned their place of confinement into a huge coverless box; while the Minister of the Interior, apparently without the least provocation, abolished the free command, and ordered the "complete isolation" which resulted in the suicide and insanity that the governor-general seems to deplore. The condition of the state criminals was not "unbearable" under the administration of Colonel Kononóvich. It became unbearable as a consequence of the orders that forced the latter's resignation.

It was hardly to be expected that young and energetic men would quietly submit to a state of things that was officially recognized as "unbearable," and that was gradually driving the weaker among them to suicide or insanity. In April, 1882, less than a year after Colonel Kononóvich's resignation, and less than a month after the delivery of Governor-general Anúchin's report to the Tsar, a few of the boldest and bravest of the state criminals at Kará made an attempt to escape by digging a tunnel under the prison wall. The excavation, which was made under the floor in one of the *kámeras*, was not discovered; but owing to the marshy nature of the ground upon which the building stood, the hole quickly filled with water, and work in it was abandoned. It then occurred to some of the prisoners that they might

political prisoners, who dread insanity more than anything else, it is, of course, terribly depressing to have constantly before them, in the form of a wrecked intelligence, an illustration of the possible end of their own existence.

[1] Report of Governor-general Anúchin to Alexander III., Chapter V., Section 3, under the heading of "Exile Penal Servitude and the Prison Department." (See Appendix H.)

escape by concealing themselves during the day in the small shop in one corner of the courtyard where they were allowed to work, and then scaling the stockade from its roof at night. The most serious difficulty in the way was the evening "verification." After supper every night the prisoners in all the cells were counted, and the men concealed in the workshop would be missed before it grew dark enough to render the scaling of the stockade reasonably safe. This difficulty the prisoners hoped to overcome by making dummies to take the places of the missing men in the *kámeras*. It was not customary to waken prisoners who happened to be asleep at the time of the evening verification. The officer on duty merely included them in the count without disturbing them, and as he did not enter the dimly lighted cell, but made his count from the door, he was not likely to notice the difference between the figure of a dummy and the figure of a real man lying asleep on the platform with his face to the wall. If the proposed stratagem should succeed, the men who escaped were to make their way down the valley of the Amúr River to the Pacific Ocean, and there endeavor to get on board of some American whaling or trading vessel. In the mean time their comrades in the prison were to supply their places with dummies at every verification, in order to conceal their escape as long as possible, and give them time enough to reach the coast before the inevitable hue and cry should be raised. Late one afternoon in April, when all necessary preparations had been made, two political convicts named Muíshkin and Khrúshchef concealed themselves in a large box in the prison workshop, and just before the time for the evening verification their places were taken by two skilfully constructed dummies in convict dress which were laid on the sleeping-platform in the cell that they had occupied. The substitution was not noticed by the officer who made the evening count, and at a late hour of the night Muíshkin and Khrúshchef crept out of the box in the workshop, climbed up on the roof, scaled

the stockade without attracting the attention of the sentry, and stole away into the forest. A few days later two more men escaped in the same way, and at the end of two weeks the prison authorities were counting every night and morning no less than six dummies, while the six prisoners represented by these lay figures were far on their way towards the coast of the Pacific. Sometime in the course of the third week after the departure of Muíshkin and Khrúshchef two more dummies were laid on the sleeping-platforms in the prison *kámeras*, and a fourth couple escaped. In getting away from the stockade, however, one of them unfortunately fell into a ditch or a pool of water, and the splash attracted the attention of the nearest sentry, who promptly fired his rifle and raised an alarm. In ten minutes the whole prison was in commotion. A careful count was made of the prisoners in all the *kámeras*, and it was found that eight men were missing. A few days before this time a visit of inspection had been made to the prison by Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, chief of the Russian prison administration, and General Ilyashévich, governor of the Trans-Baikál, and when the escape was discovered these high officials were on their way from Kará to Chíta. In response to a summons from Major Pótulof they hurried back to the Lower Diggings and personally superintended the organization of a thorough and widely extended search for the missing men. Telegrams were dispatched to all the seaport towns along the coast of the Pacific, as well as to all points on the Amúr that could be reached by telegraph; descriptions and photographs of the fugitives were mailed to police officials throughout Eastern Siberia; orders were issued to arrest all suspicious or unknown persons; and searching parties of natives, stimulated by the promise of reward, scoured the forests in all parts of the Trans-Baikál. It was impossible, of course, for men who were unfamiliar with the country, who had neither guides, maps, nor compasses, and who were enfeebled by long imprisonment, to elude, for any

great length of time, so persistent and far-reaching a pursuit. Although two of them, Muíshkin and Khrúshchef, made a journey of more than a thousand miles, and actually reached the seaport town of Vládivostók, every one of the fugitives was ultimately recaptured and brought back to Karà in handcuffs and leg-fetters.[1]

In the mean time the prison authorities at Karà were making preparations to "give the political convicts a lesson"[2] and "reduce the prison to order." This they purposed to do by depriving the prisoners of all the privileges that they had previously enjoyed; by taking away from them books, money, underclothing, bedclothing, and every other thing not furnished by the Government to common criminals of the penal-servitude class; by distributing them in small parties among the common-convict prisons at Ust Karà, Middle Karà, and Upper Karà; and by subjecting them to what are known to Russian prisoners as "dungeon conditions" (*kártsernoi polozhénie*).[3] Anticipating, or pretending to anticipate, insubordination or resistance to these measures on the part of the politicals, Ilyashévich and Gálkine Wrásskoy concentrated at the Lower Diggings six *sótnias* of Cossacks, and after ten days of inaction, intended, apparently, to throw the prisoners off their guard, ordered a sudden descent upon the prison in the night. This unprovoked attack of an armed force upon sleeping and defense-

[1] The politicals who took part in this unsuccessful attempt to escape were Muíshkin, Khrúshchef, Bólomez, Levchénko, Yurkófski, Dikófski, Kryzhanófski, and Minakóf.

[2] This was the expression used by Major Pótulof in speaking to me of the events that followed the escape. It is believed by many of the politicals at Karà that the prison authorities deliberately intended to provoke them to violence, in order, first, to have an excuse for administering corporal punishment, and, secondly, artificially to create a "bunt," or prison insurrection, that would divert the attention of the Minister of the Interior from their (the officials') negligence in allowing eight dangerous criminals to escape.

[3] A prisoner living under "dungeon conditions" is deprived of money, books, writing-materials, underclothing, bedclothing, tobacco, and all other luxuries; he is not allowed to walk for exercise in the courtyard nor to have any communication with the outside world; and he must live exclusively upon black rye-bread and water, with now and then a little of the soup, or broth thickened with barley, which is known to the political convicts as *balánda*.

less prisoners is known in the history of the Kará political prison as "the *pogróm* of May 11."[1] Three or four hundred Cossacks with bayoneted rifles marched noiselessly into the courtyard under direction of Lieutenant-colonel Rúdenko, filled the prison corridor, and then, throwing open suddenly and simultaneously the doors of all the *kámeras*, rushed in upon the bewildered politicals, dragged them from their sleeping-platforms, and proceeded with great roughness and brutality to search them, deprive them of their personal property, strip them of their clothing, and hale them out into the courtyard. All the remonstrances and protests of the sufferers were answered with insults; and when some of the more impetuous of them, indignant at the unprovoked brutality of the assault, armed themselves with boards torn up from the sleeping-platforms and made an attempt to defend themselves, they were knocked down and mercilessly beaten by the Cossacks with the butt-ends of their guns. Among the prisoners most cruelly maltreated were Voloshénko, Rodióñof, Kobyliánski, Bobókhof, and Orlóf. It is not necessary to go minutely into the details of this scene of cruelty and violence. I do not wish to make it out any worse than it really was, and for my purpose it is sufficient to say that before noon on the 11th of May, 1882, the bruised and bleeding political convicts, robbed of all their personal possessions and stripped of the boots and underclothing that they had bought with their own money and that they had previously been permitted to wear, set out in three parties, on foot and without breakfast, for the common-criminal prisons of Ust, Middle, and Upper Kará. They were guarded by convoys of from fifty to one hundred Cossacks, who had express instructions from Governor Ilyashévich not to spare the butt-ends of their guns. The party destined for Ust Kará, in which there was one man chained

[1] The word *pogróm* has no precise equivalent in the English language. It means a sudden, violent, and destructive attack, like one of the raids made upon the Jews by infuriated peasants in Russian towns some years ago.

to a wheelbarrow, asked permission to stop and rest on the road, as they had had nothing to eat or drink that day and were marching a distance of fifteen *versts* (about ten miles). The soldiers of the convoy, however, refused to allow them to stop, and pricked them on with their bayonets. Thereupon the prisoners who were not handcuffed attacked the Cossacks with stones. An unequal contest followed, in the course of which the men who resisted were knocked down and beaten again with the butt-ends of guns, and all who were not already manacled had their hands tied securely behind their backs. Late in the afternoon, bruised, tired, hungry, and thirsty, they reached Ust Karáa, and after being again carefully searched were shut up by twos in the dark and dirty "secret" cells[1] of the common-criminal prison, where they threw their weary bodies down on the cold, damp floors and congratulated themselves that the day was over. The parties sent respectively to the Amúrski prison

[1] "Secret" cells in Siberian prisons are those intended for the solitary confinement of persons accused of murder or other capital crimes. They were not generally shown us in our visits to prisons, but I was permitted by Colonel Makófski to inspect the "secret" cells in the prison at Irkútsk. These had neither beds nor sleeping-platforms, and contained no furniture of any kind except a *parásha*, or excrement bucket. The prisoners confined in them were forced to sleep without pillows or bedclothing on the cold cement or stone floor, and during the day had either to sit on this floor or to stand. I saw men who had not yet been tried occupying such cells as these in the Irkútsk prison. If I had power to summon as witnesses the subordinate officials of the House of Preliminary Detention in St. Petersburg, I could prove, in a Russian court, that even in that show-prison of the Empire there were *kártsers*, or disciplinary cells, where there was not so much as a *parásha*, and where the floors were covered with excrement. Of course Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy and Mr. Kokóftsef, the heads of the Russian prison administration, were not aware of this fact; but, nevertheless, it is a fact, unless both political prisoners and the prison officials themselves severally and independently lied to me. The political offender Dicheskúlo was put into such a cell as this after the riot in the House of Preliminary Detention that followed the flogging of Bogoliúbof, I did not see the "secret" cells in the Karáa prisons, but there is no reason to suppose that they were in any better condition than the *kámeras* that I did see and that I have described. I do not mean to have the reader draw the sweeping and mistaken conclusion that all cells, or even all "secret" cells, in Russian prisons are of this kind, nor that the higher prison officials are in all cases responsible for such a state of affairs. All that I aim to do is to make plain the conditions under which educated and delicately nurtured political offenders in Russian prisons are *sometimes* compelled to live.

and the prison in Middle Kará had an experience similar to that of the Ust Kará party, except that they were not beaten by their guards. Before dark the hundred or more state criminals who had occupied the *kámeras* of the political prison were distributed in small parties among the common-criminal prisons of Ust Kará, the Lower Diggings, Middle Kará, and Upper Kará; the long-term [*bez sróchni*] convicts were in both handcuffs and leg-fetters, and all were living under "dungeon conditions." In this manner Governor Ilyashévich and Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy put down the "insurrection" that a hundred or more sleeping prisoners presumably would have raised when they awoke, taught the "insurgents" a valuable and much-needed "lesson," and showed the Minister of the Interior how vigorously and successfully his subordinates could deal with a sudden and threatening emergency—and with sleeping men! The political prison had been "reduced to order," but it was the "order" that once "reigned in Warsaw."

For two months the political convicts lived under "dungeon conditions" in the cells of the common-criminal prisons, seeing little of one another and knowing nothing of what was happening in the outside world. Bad air, bad and insufficient food, and the complete lack of exercise soon began injuriously to affect their health; scurvy broke out among them, and in less than a month several, including Tíkhonof and Zhukófski, were at the point of death,[1] and many more were so weak that they could not rise to their feet when ordered to stand up for verification. During all of this time the prison authorities had in their possession money belonging to these wretched convicts; but they would not allow the latter to use it, nor to direct its expenditure for the underclothing, bedding, and nourishing food of which the sick especially were in such urgent need. It was not until scurvy threatened to become epidemic that Major Khaltúrin, a cruel gendarme officer from

[1] Tíkhonof died shortly afterwards.

Irkútsk who had succeeded Major Pótulof in the command of the political prison, consented to allow the prisoners to have bedding.

In the women's prison at Ust Karâ the state of affairs was little better. The women, of course, had had nothing whatever to do with the escape, nor with the artificially created "insurrection," but they had, nevertheless, to take their share of the consequences. The new commandant, Major Khaltúrin, believed in strict discipline with no favors; and he regarded the permission that had tacitly been given the women to wear their own dress instead of the prison costume as an unnecessary concession to a foolish and sentimental weakness. He therefore ordered that their own clothing be taken away from them, and that they be required to put on the convict garb. Some of the women were sick and unable to change their dress, others did not believe that the order would really be enforced, and they refused to obey it, and finally the overseer of the prison resorted to violence. The scene that ensued produced such an effect upon Madam Léschern that she attempted to commit suicide.

Outside the political prison at the Lower Diggings were living a number of women who had voluntarily come to the mines in order to be near their husbands. Previous to the escape and the *pogróm* these women had been allowed to have interviews with their imprisoned husbands once or twice a week, and had received from the latter small sums of money, with the help of which they contrived to exist. After the prison had been "reduced to order" and the political convicts had been subjected to "dungeon conditions," interviews between husbands and wives were no longer permitted; and as the prisoners' money was all held in the possession of the authorities, the unfortunate women and children were soon reduced almost to starvation. Véra Rogatchóf, wife of Lieutenant Dmítri Rogatchóf, a young artillery officer then in penal servitude, was brought to

such a state of destitution and despair that she finally shot herself.

On the 6th of July, 1882, eight of the political convicts, who were regarded by the Government for some reason as particularly dangerous, were sent back in chains from Kará to St. Petersburg to be immured for life in the "stone bags" of the castle of Schlusselburg.[1] A few days later—about the middle of July—all the rest of the state criminals were brought back to the political prison at the Lower Diggings, where they were put into new and much smaller cells that had been made by erecting partitions in the original *kámeras* in such a manner as to divide each of them into thirds. The effect of this change was to crowd every group of seven or eight men into a cell that was so nearly filled by the sleeping-platform as to leave no room for locomotion. Two men could not stand side by side in the narrow space between the edge of the platform and the wall, and the occupants of the cell were therefore compelled to sit or lie all day on the plank *nári* without occupation for either minds or bodies. To add to their misery, *paráshas* were set in their small cells, and the air at times became so offensive and polluted that, to use the expression of one of them in a letter to me, "it was simply maddening." No other reply was made to their petitions and remonstrances than a threat from Khaltúrin that if they did not keep quiet they would be flogged. With a view to intimidating them Khaltúrin even sent a surgeon to make a physical examination of one political, for the avowed purpose of ascertaining whether his state of health was such that he could be flogged without endangering his life. This was the last straw. The wretched state criminals, deprived of exercise, living under

[1] These "dangerous" prisoners were Messrs. Géllis, Voloshénko, Butsínski, Paul Orlóf, Malávski, Popóf, Shchedrín, and Kobyliánski. Nothing is known with regard to their fate. Madame Géllis, the wife of one of them, whose acquaintance I made in the Trans-Baikál, told me that she was denied a last interview with her husband when he was taken away from Kará, that she never afterwards heard from him, and that she did not know whether he was among the living or the dead.

"dungeon conditions," poisoned by air laden with the stench of excrement-buckets, and finally threatened with the whip when they complained, could endure no more. They resolved to make that last desperate protest against cruelty which is known in Russian prisons as a *golodófka*, or "hunger-strike." They sent a notification to Major Khaltúrin that their life had finally become unendurable, that they preferred death to such an existence, and that they should refuse to take food until they either perished or forced the Government to treat them with more humanity. No attention was paid to their notification, but from that moment not a mouthful of the food that was set into their cells was touched. As day after day passed, the stillness of death gradually settled down upon the prison. The starving convicts, too weak and apathetic even to talk to one another, lay in rows, like dead men, upon the plank sleeping-platforms, and the only sounds to be heard in the building were the footsteps of the sentries, and now and then the incoherent mutterings of the insane. On the fifth day of the *golodófka* Major Khaltúrin, convinced that the hunger-strike was serious, came to the prison and asked the convicts to state definitely upon what terms they would discontinue their protest. They replied that the conditions of their life were unbearable, and that they should continue their self-starvation until the excrement-buckets were taken out of their cells, until they were permitted to have books and to exercise daily in the open air, until they were allowed to direct the expenditure of their money for better food and better clothing than were furnished by the Government, and until he [Khaltúrin] gave them a solemn assurance that none of them should be flogged. The commandant told them that the talk about flogging was nonsense; that there had never been any serious intention of resorting to the whip, and that, if they would end their strike, he would see what could be done to improve the material conditions of their life. Not being able to get any positive assurances

that their demands would be complied with, the prisoners continued the *golodóf ka.* On the tenth day the state of affairs had become alarming. All of the starving men were in the last stages of physical prostration, and some of them seemed to be near their death. Count Dmítri Tolstoï, the Minister of the Interior, who had been apprised of the situation, telegraphed the commandant to keep a *skórbnoi list*, or "hospital sheet," setting forth the symptoms and condition of the strikers, and to inform him promptly of any marked change.[1] Every day thereafter a *feldsher* or hospital-steward went through the cells taking the pulse and the temperature of the starving men. On the thirteenth day of the *golodóf ka* Major Khaltúrin sent word to the wives of all the political convicts living at the Lower Diggings that they might have an interview with their husbands—the first in more than two months—if they would try to persuade them to begin taking food. They gladly assented, of course, to this condition, and were admitted to the prison. At the same time Khaltúrin went himself to the starving men and assured them, on his honor, that if they would end the hunger-strike he would do everything in his power

[1] I have never been able to understand why a government that is capable when irritated of treating prisoners in this way should hesitate a moment about letting them die, and thus getting rid of them. However, I believe it is a fact that in every case where political hunger-strikers have had courage and nerve enough to starve themselves to the point of death the authorities have manifested anxiety and have ultimately yielded. It is one of many similar inconsistencies in Russian penal administration. The Government seems to be sensitive to some things and brutally insensible to others. It prides itself upon its humanity in expunging the death penalty from its civil code, and yet it inflicts death constantly by sentences of courts-martial in civil cases. It has abolished the *knut*, but it flogs with the *plet*, which, according to the testimony of Russian officers, can be made to cause death in a hundred blows. It shrinks from allowing political convicts to die of self-starvation and yet it puts them to a slow death in the "stone bags" of the castle of Schlusselburg. To the practical American intelligence it would seem to be safer, as well as more humane, to order political convicts out into the prison courtyard and have them shot, than to kill them slowly under "dungeon conditions." Society would not be half so much shocked and exasperated by summary executions as it now is by suicides, hunger-strikes, and similar evidences of intolerable misery among the political convicts in prison and at the mines.

to satisfy their demands. The entreaties of the wretched, heart-broken women, and the promises of the commandant finally broke down the resolution of the politicals, and on the thirteenth day the first hunger-strike in the history of the Karâ political prison came to an end.

While these events were taking place, a young married woman about twenty-four years of age, named Maria Kutitónskaya, who had been condemned to penal servitude on account of her revolutionary activity in Odéssa, finished her prison term in Karâ, and was sent as a forced colonist to a small village called Akshâ, situated in the southern part of the Trans-Baikâl, on the frontier of Mongolia. She had been an eye-witness of the brutalities that attended the "reduction of the political prison to order" by Rúdenko and Pótulof; she had seen the "lesson" given to the political convicts with the butt-ends of guns; she herself had felt the shame and misery that impelled Madam Léschern and Mrs. Rogatchóf to attempt self-destruction; she was acquainted with the causes and history of the long and desperate hunger-strike that had just ended; and, stirred to the very depths of her soul by a feeling of intense indignation, she determined, as a last resort and at the cost of her own life, to assassinate General Ilyashévich, the governor of the Trans-Baikâl, and thus call the attention of the world to the cruelties practised by his authority, and in part under his direction, at the mines of Karâ. She was at this time pregnant, and was aware of her condition; she knew that it would be impossible to escape after committing the crime that she contemplated; she knew that she was about to sacrifice her own life, and probably the life also of her unborn child; but so intense were the emotions aroused by all she had seen and known at Karâ, that she was ready to commit murder, and to die for it, upon the chance that the deed and its investigation would give publicity to the wrongs and outrages that she and her companions had suffered. As soon as she could get together money enough for her traveling

expenses after her arrival at Akshá, she bought a small, cheap revolver from a common-criminal colonist, ran away from her place of banishment, and, hiring horses from the peasants in the villages through which she passed, made her way towards Chíta, which was the governor's place of residence. As it was not customary for young and attractive women to travel entirely alone in that part of the world, she was regarded with a good deal of interest and curiosity by the peasants, and just before she reached her destination she was arrested by a village official upon suspicion. She persuaded this man to take her to Chíta and turn her over to the *isprávnik*, with whom she was personally acquainted. To the *isprávnik* she admitted frankly that she had run away from her place of exile, but said that in so doing she had not intended to escape, but merely to get an interview with the governor. After some conversation the *isprávnik* went with her to the governor's house, and, leaving her in a reception-room, went to apprise Ilyashévich of her presence and her desire for an interview.

"Have you searched her?" inquired the governor suspiciously.

"No," replied the *isprávnik;* "I did n't think of it."

"Never mind," said Ilyashévich. "What can a woman do?" And with these words he entered the reception room where Madam Kutitónskaya, with a cocked revolver hidden under a handkerchief in her right hand, was awaiting him. As he advanced to greet her she raised the revolver, and saying, "This is for the 11th of May,"[1] shot him through the lungs. The wound was not mortal, but he fell to the floor and was carried to a couch by some of the servants, while the *isprávnik* seized and disarmed Madam Kutitánskaya, caused her to be bound, and sent her under strong guard to the Chíta prison. Her life there was a life of terrible loneliness and misery. She was put into a cold, dirty, "secret" cell, which the district architect of the Trans-Bai-

[1] The date of the *pogróm* in the Karà political prison.

kál described to me as "hardly long enough to lie down in or high enough to stand up in." Her own dress and underclothing were taken away from her, and in place of them she was given an old prison suit that had already been worn by a common convict and was full of vermin. She lived under strict "dungeon conditions," and for three months lay without bed-clothing on the bare floor. When, as a result of such hardships and privations, she became sick, and asked for straw to lay down on the planks where she slept, she was told by the chief of police, Mélnikof, that there was no straw for her. But for the food smuggled into her cell and the aid surreptitiously given to her by sympathetic common-criminal convicts in the same prison, she would undoubtedly have died before the meeting of the court appointed to investigate the case. After three months of this wretched existence she was tried by court-martial and sentenced to be hanged. Then, for another whole month, she lay under sentence of death, arguing with herself, through many long, sleepless nights, the question whether or not she should make known to the authorities her pregnant condition, which had not yet become apparent. She knew that an announcement of the fact that she was with child would, in accordance with the custom in such cases, secure a long reprieve if not a commutation of her sentence; but, on the other hand, life held no hope for her, and she believed that if she allowed herself to be hanged under such circumstances, the fact of her pregnancy, which would inevitably be discovered after her death, would intensify the feeling of horror that she hoped would be excited by the series of events which had led up to the catastrophe—would give to such events even greater publicity, and would inspire all lovers of humanity and justice with a deeper and bitterer hatred of the Government. The questions that tormented her most were first, whether, if she allowed herself to be hanged without revealing her condition, she would not be the murderer of her unborn child, and secondly, whether that child

would die when she died, or would live for a time in her dead body. This last ghastly doubt seems to have been particularly harrowing to her in her morbid mental condition, but even in the face of such reflections she finally decided to allow herself to be hanged. Early in January, 1883, the Government, without reference to her condition, of which it was still ignorant, commuted her sentence to penal servitude for life[1] and sent her with a returning party of common-criminal exiles to the city of Irkútsk. Although it was mid-winter, she was not provided with a sheepskin overcoat, nor with felt boots, and she might have perished from cold on the road if the common criminals in the party had not taken pity upon her and furnished her with warm clothing at the expense of their own comfort. When she reached Irkútsk she was in such a condition that she had to be lifted out of her sleigh. As a result of this prolonged agony of mind and body, her child, a short time afterwards, was born dead in the Irkútsk prison. When we left Siberia in 1886 she was still living. All that I know of her life since that time is that it has ended.

When one of my informants first knew Madam Kutitónskaya she was a happy, careless school-girl in Odéssa, and no one would have ventured to predict that in less than ten years she would develop into a woman of such extraordinary energy, courage, self-control, and firmness of purpose. There are few things more remarkable in the records of heroism than the determination of Madam Kutitónskaya to allow herself to be hanged, with a child in her womb, in order that the horror of such an execution might stir the emotions of every man and woman who heard of it, and give wider publicity to the series of events of which it was the final

[1] I was credibly informed, and in justice the fact should be stated, that this commutation of sentence was asked for by Governor Ilyashévich, whose life Madam Kutitónskaya had attempted. Whether he felt, upon reflection, some stirrings of pity and remorse, or whether he merely wished to make a showing of magnanimity in order to throw doubt upon the reports of his cruelty at the mines and break their effect, I do not know.

outcome. Such, however, is the type of character that is forged in the furnace of oppression and tempered in the cold bath of solitary confinement.

The statements that I have made with regard to the events that led to the shooting of Governor Ilyashóvich are based upon conversations with the political convicts who were actors in them, and upon three independently prepared accounts in manuscript of the escape, the *pogróm*, and the hunger-strike. The story of the attempted assassination, and of Madam Kutitónskaya's life in prison is from one of her letters, written after her arrival in Irkútsk. The brief transcript of her intentions, thoughts, and reflections, while lying under sentence of death in Chíta, was obtained from an exiled lady who had many long talks with her in the Irkútsk prison, and whose acquaintance I subsequently made. The whole story, in its main outlines, is known to political exiles throughout Siberia, and I heard it in half a dozen different places. All the efforts that I dared make to get at the Government's side of the case were unsuccessful. The officials to whom I applied for information—with a few exceptions—either manifested such a disinclination to talk that I could not pursue the subject, or else made preposterous attempts to deceive me. A young surgeon in the Irkútsk prison whom I questioned about Madam Kutitónskaya was so frightened that he got rid of me as soon as possible and never dared return my call. The *isprávnik* of Nérchinski Zavód, who went to Karà with some of the recaptured fugitives after the escape, described the political convicts to me as *lofki moshénniki* [clever rogues] who were not deserving of either sympathy or respect. Most of them, he said, were "priests' sons, or seminarists who had been expelled from school." Lieutenant-colonel Nóvikof, who was for three years or more commander of the Cossack battalion at the mines of Karà, assured me that the political convicts were mere *malchíshki* [miserable insignificant boys], without any definite aims or convictions; that out of one hundred

and fifty of them that he had known at Kará only three or four had any education, and that Madam Kutitónskaya's attempt to assassinate Governor Ilyashévich was "a mere crazy freak"—that "she did n't know herself what she did it for." The attentive reader will see that I have had no difficulty in making my choice between such preposterous statements as these and the clear, coherent, and detailed narratives of the political convicts themselves. If my history of the Kará political prison is one-sided, it is simply because the other side either refused to give me information, or was too ignorant to state its own case with any show of plausibility.

How far from the real truth were the statements made to me by officials with regard to the character of the political convicts at Kará, I purpose to show by giving brief biographies of three or four of the men and women who took an active part in the series of events that I have tried to describe, or who were identified with the later history of the political prison. One of the ablest and most distinguished of them was Anna Pávlovna Korbá, whose portrait, made from a photograph taken before her exile, will be found on page 247. She was the daughter of a Russian nobleman named Paul Mengart, and was born in the province of Tver, near Moscow, in 1849. She was carefully educated under the direction of her mother, a cultured and deeply religious woman, and at the early age of eighteen or nineteen she was married to a Swiss gentleman residing in Russia named Victor Korbá. Her beauty and accomplishments made her greatly sought after in society, her husband was wealthy and was proud of her social success, and for a time she lived the life of a woman of the great world. This life, however, could not long satisfy a young girl of bright mind and serious character, and in 1869, when she was only twenty years of age, she made an attempt to fit herself for something better. A school for the higher education of the daughters of the nobility was opened about that time in

connection with a boys' college in St. Petersburg, and Madam Korbá at once enrolled herself as a student, with the intention of finally completing her education in one of the institutions for women at Zurich or in Paris. In 1870 her husband failed in business: she was forced to abandon the hope of finishing her collegiate training abroad, and a short time afterwards went with her husband to reside in the small provincial town of Minsk, where he had obtained employment. Here she began her career of public activity by organizing a society and raising a fund for the purpose of promoting popular education and aiding poor students in the universities. Of this society she was the president. In 1877 the Russo-Turkish war broke out, and opened to her ardent and generous nature a new field of benevolent activity. As soon as wounded Russian soldiers began to come back from Bulgaria, she went into the hospitals of Minsk as a Sister of Mercy, and a short time afterwards put on the uniform of the International Association of the Red Cross, and went to the front and took a position as a Red Cross nurse in a Russian field-hospital beyond the Danube. She was then hardly twenty-seven years of age. What she saw and what she suffered in the course of that terrible Russo-Turkish campaign can be imagined by those who have seen the paintings of the Russian artist Vereshchágin. Her experience had a marked and permanent effect upon her character. She became an enthusiastic lover and admirer of the common Russian peasant, who bears upon his weary shoulders the whole burden of the Russian state, but who is cheated, robbed, and oppressed, even while fighting the battles of his country. She determined to devote the remainder of her life to the education and the emancipation of this oppressed class of the Russian people. At the close of the war she returned to Russia, but was almost immediately prostrated by typhus fever contracted in an overcrowded hospital. After a long and dangerous illness she finally recovered, and began the

task that she had set herself; but she was opposed and thwarted at every step by the police and the bureaucratic officials who were interested in maintaining the existing

ANNA PÁVLOVNA KORBÁ.

state of things, and she gradually became convinced that before much could be done to improve the condition of the common people the Government must be overthrown. She soon afterwards became a revolutionist, joined the party of

"The Will of the People," and participated actively in all the attempts that were made between 1879 and 1882 to overthrow the autocracy and establish a constitutional form of government. On the 5th of June, 1882, she was arrested and thrown into the fortress of Petropávlovsk, and some months later was tried before the Governing Senate upon the charge of being a terrorist. At the end of the trial she was asked if she had any last words to say in her own defense, and she replied as follows:

"I do not admit my guilt. I will, however, admit that I belong to the revolutionary party,—the party of the Will of the People,—and that I believe in its principles and share its views. As for an organization that chooses and prefers a path of bloodshed, I do not know of any such organization, and I doubt whether any such organization exists. Such a party may arise in time, if the revolutionary movement extends; but if I be living when the time comes, I will not belong to it. If the party of the Will of the People adopts the policy of terror, it is not because it prefers terrorism, but because terrorism is the only possible method of attaining the objects set before it by the historical conditions of Russian life. These are sad and fateful words, and they bear a prophecy of terrible calamity. Gentlemen—Senators, you are well acquainted with the fundamental laws of the Russian Empire. You are aware that no one has a right to advocate any change in the existing imperial form of Government, or even to think of such a thing. Merely to present to the Crown a collective petition is forbidden—and yet the country is growing and developing, the conditions of social life are becoming day by day more and more complicated, and the moment approaches when the Russian people will burst through the barriers from which there is no exit."

The presiding judge, interrupting: "That is your personal opinion."

Madam Korbá, continuing: "The historical task set before the party of the Will of the People is to widen these

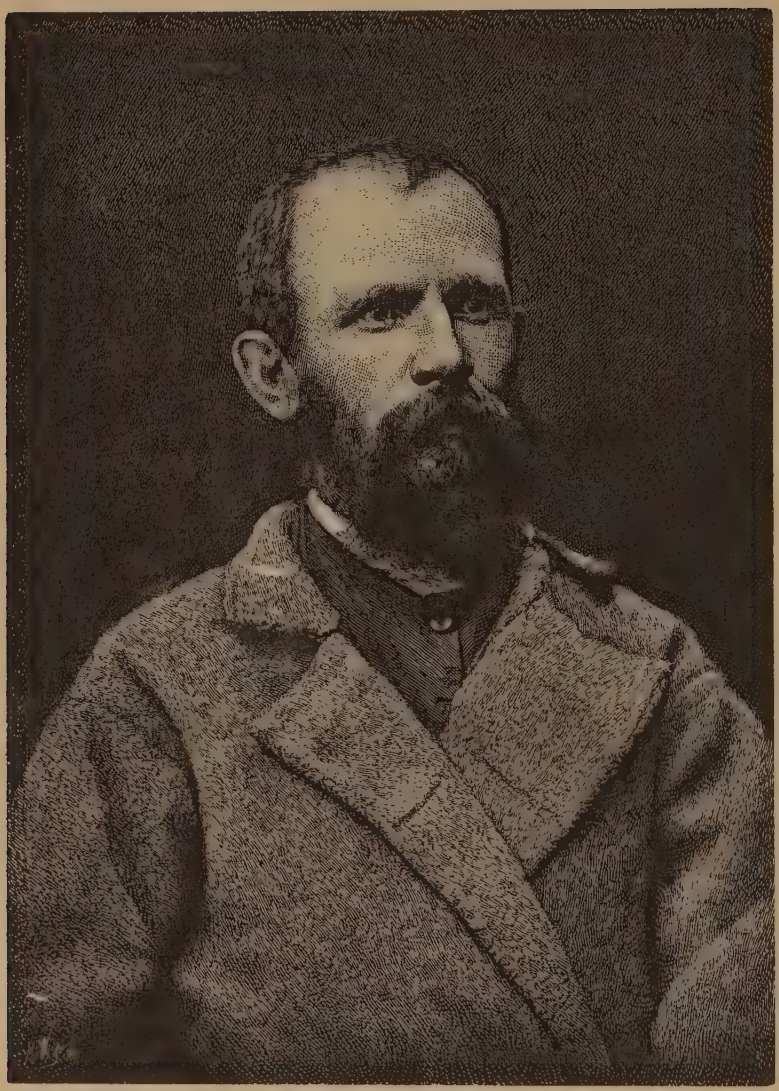
barriers and to obtain for Russia independence and freedom. The means for the attainment of these objects depend directly upon the Government. We do not adhere obstinately to terrorism. The hand that is raised to strike will instantly fall if the Government will change the political conditions of life. Our party has patriotic self-control enough not to take revenge for its bleeding wounds; but, unless it prove false to the Russian people, it cannot lay down its arms until it has conquered for that people freedom and well-being. As a proof that the aims of our party are wholly peaceful, I beg you to read the letter written to Alexander III. soon after the 1st of March.[1] You will see from it that we desire only reforms, but reforms that shall be sincere, complete, and vital."

Madam Korbá's last words did not soften towards her the hearts of her judges, and of course she did not expect that they would. She was found guilty, and was sentenced to twenty years of penal servitude with deprivation of all civil rights, and forced colonization in Siberia for life at the expiration of her penal term.[2] At the date of my last advices from the mines of Kará she was still living, but she was greatly broken, and there was little probability that she would long endure the hardships and privations of penal servitude.

Among the male political convicts at the mines of Kará whose careers most interested me was Hypolyte Muíshkin, whose portrait was engraved from a police photograph taken while he was in the fortress of Petropávlovsk. In the year 1864 a well-known author and political economist named Chernishéfski, whose famous novel, "What is to be Done?" has recently been translated into English, was tried in St. Petersburg as a revolutionist and banished to Siberia. He was at first sent to the Alexandrófski central prison,

1 The date of the assassination of Alexander II. A translation of the letter to which Madam Korbá referred will be found in Appendix C.

2 The official report of the trial of Madam Korbá and others may be found in the St. Petersburg newspaper *Nóvosti*, No. 9, April 9, 1883.



HYPOLYTE MUÍSHKIN.
(From a police photograph taken in convict dress.)

near Irkútsk, but ultimately he was transferred to the small town of Villúisk, in the sub-arctic province of Yakútsk, where he lived many years under the strictest police sur-

veillance. When, in 1870, the modern revolutionary movement began, it was the dream of all the ardent young Russian revolutionists to rescue Chernishéfski from Siberian exile, and enable him to escape from the Empire to some place where he could continue his work unmolested. Several attempts were made to liberate him, but they all failed, and the project was finally abandoned as impracticable. In 1875 a young student in the Technological Institute at St. Petersburg named Hypolyte Muíshkin conceived the idea of going to Siberia in the disguise of a captain of gendarmes and presenting himself boldly to the *isprávnik* in Villúisk with forged orders from the gendarmerie directing him [Muíshkin] to take charge of the exile Chernishéfski and carry him to Blagovéshchinsk, on the Amúr River. Such transfers of dangerous political exiles were not at that time uncommon, and Muíshkin felt confident that he should accomplish his purpose. He went as a private traveler to Irkútsk, resided there several months, succeeded in getting into the corps of gendarmes as a subordinate officer, and in a short time made himself so useful that he was generally trusted and was given the freedom of the office. He provided himself with the necessary blanks, filled them up with an order accrediting him as a gendarme officer intrusted with the duty of taking the exile Chernishéfski to Blagovéshchinsk, forged the signatures, affixed the proper seals, provided himself with the uniform of a captain of gendarmes, and then resigned his position in the gendarmerie upon the pretext that he had received news that made it necessary for him to return at once to European Russia. He disappeared from Irkútsk, and as soon as he deemed it prudent to do so he set out for Villúisk, with the uniform of a gendarme officer in his satchel, and a forged order in his pocket directing the *isprávnik* of Villúisk, Captain Zhírkof, to turn over the exile Chernishéfski to him for conveyance to Blagovéshchinsk. Muíshkin was an accomplished conspirator, an eloquent talker, and a man of fine personal presence, and

when he presented himself in the uniform of a gendarme officer to the *isprávnik* at Villúisk he was received at first with unquestioning deference and respect. He stated his business, and produced the order directing the *isprávnik* to turn over the distinguished exile to him for conveyance to Blagovéshchinsk. The plot came very near succeeding, and probably would have succeeded if Muíshkin had had money enough to bring with him two or three confederates in the disguise of soldiers or gendarmes and in the capacity of escort. It is very unusual for a commissioned officer to travel in Siberia without at least one soldier or Cossack to look after his baggage, to see about getting post-horses promptly, and to act generally in the capacity of body-servant. The absence of such a man or men was especially noticeable and unusual in this case, for the reason that Muíshkin was to take charge of an important and dangerous political offender. The absence of an escort was the first thing that excited the *isprávnik's* suspicion. It seemed to him very strange that a gendarme officer should be sent there after Chernishéfski without a guard of two or three soldiers to help him to take care of the dangerous prisoner, and the more he thought about it the more suspicious the whole affair appeared to him. After a night's reflection he decided not to turn over Chernishéfski to this gendarme officer without the sanction of the governor of the province, who resided in Yakútsk, and at breakfast the next morning he told Muíshkin that Governor Chernáief was his — the *isprávnik's* — immediate superior, and that without an order from the governor he did not feel justified in surrendering an exile of so much importance as the political economist Chernishéfski. He proposed, therefore, to send a courier to Yakútsk with Muíshkin's papers, and to await the return of this courier before taking any action.

"Very well," replied Muíshkin coolly. "I did not suppose that it would be necessary to obtain the consent of the governor before complying with the orders of the imperial

police; but if such consent is indispensable, I will go to Governor Chernáief myself and get it."

When Muíshkin set out for Yakútsk, the *isprávnik*, whose suspicions had meanwhile grown stronger, said to him, "It is not proper for an officer of your rank to travel about without any escort, and if you will permit me to do so I will send with you a couple of Cossacks." Muíshkin could not object, and the Cossacks were sent—the *isprávnik* instructing them that they were on no account to lose sight of this gendarme officer, because there was something suspicious about him, and it was not certain that he really was what he pretended to be. As soon as Muíshkin had gone, the *isprávnik* wrote a letter to the governor, apprising him of his suspicions, and sent it by another Cossack, with directions to get ahead of Muíshkin if possible and deliver it before the latter reached his destination. The Cossack overtook Muíshkin on the road, and in the course of conversation among the soldiers the fact transpired that the third Cossack had a letter from the *isprávnik* to the governor. Muíshkin knew then that the game was lost, and at the first favorable opportunity he attempted to escape by dashing suddenly into the woods. The Cossacks, in pursuance of their instructions, endeavored to keep him in sight; but he drew his revolver, fired at them, wounded one of them, and finally made his escape. For nearly a week he wandered around in the great primeval forests that border the river Léna; but at last, half dead from cold, hunger, and exhaustion, he was captured.[1] After some months of imprisonment in Irkútsk he was sent under strong guard to St. Petersburg and was there thrown into the fortress of Petropávlovsk. For nearly three years he lay in a bomb-proof casemate of the Trubetskói bastion awaiting trial, and all that I know of this part of his life I learned from an exile in Siberia who occupied a cell in the fortress near him. This gentleman said that Muíshkin was often delirious from

[1] Indictment in the case of "the 193." Official Copy, pp. 239 and 240.

fever, excitement, or the maddening effect of long solitary confinement, and that he frequently heard his cries when he was put into a strait-jacket or strapped to his bed by the fortress guard.

In October, 1878, Muíshkin was finally tried with "the 193" before a special session of the Governing Senate. All of the political prisoners brought to the bar on the occasion of this famous trial insisted that the public should be admitted to hear the proceedings, and that they—the prisoners—should be allowed to have their own stenographer. The Government declined to accede to either of these demands, and, as a consequence, most of the politicals refused to make any defense or to take any part in the proceedings. At the end of the trial Muíshkin, when asked if he had any last words to say, made a fiery speech denouncing the secrecy of the trial, and declaring that they did not desire nor expect to escape punishment, but thought they had a right to ask that they be tried in open court and that their case be laid before the people through the press. As soon as Muíshkin began to attack the Government he was ordered by the presiding judge to be silent, and when he refused, and insisted upon his right to be heard, the gendarmes were directed to remove him from the court-room. The last words he uttered before he was choked into silence and dragged out were: "This court is worse than a house of ill-fame; there they sell only bodies, but here you prostitute honor, and justice, and law!" For his original offense, aggravated by this outrageous insult to the court, Muíshkin was sentenced to ten years of penal servitude with deprivation of all civil rights, and was shortly afterwards incarcerated in the central convict prison at Kharkóf.[1] I have not space for even the briefest description of the sufferings of the political convicts in that prison. The story has been written by one of them and published surreptitiously in

[1] A brief summary of Muíshkin's speech and a description of this scene were published in the New-York *Tribune* for March 7 or 8, 1878.

Russia under the significant title, "Last Words over the Coffin of Alexander II." I hope sometime to translate and republish this document, and I need only say now that I have the names of six politicals who went insane in that prison during the short time that it was used as a place of confinement for such offenders. Muíshkin was put into a small cell in the lower story that had formerly been occupied by the distinguished political Prince Tsitsiánof. His courage and energy soon led him to meditate plans of escape, and before the end of the first year he had made a dummy to lie in his place on the sleeping-platform, and with only his hands and a small piece of board had dug a tunnel out under the prison wall, disposing of the earth that he removed by packing it into a space between the floor of his cell and the ground. He had also made himself a suit of clothing to put on in place of the prison costume after he should make his escape. Prince Tsitsiánof, who had occupied the cell before him, was a scientist, and during his term of imprisonment had been allowed to have some large maps. These maps had been left as old rubbish on the oven, and Muíshkin had soaked the paper off from the muslin on which they were mounted and had made out of the cloth a shirt and a pair of trousers. His preparations for escape were virtually complete, and he was only waiting for a favorable opportunity, when one of the prison officials came to his cell at an unusual hour to speak to him. Muíshkin happened to be down in his tunnel, while the dummy was lying in his place on the bed as if he were asleep. The official soon discovered that the lay figure was not the prisoner, an alarm was raised, the mouth of the tunnel was found, and Muíshkin was dragged out like a rat from its hole. He was then put into another cell, from which escape was impossible. At the expiration of two or three months, fearing that he was about to become insane, he determined to do something for which he would be shot. He asked and obtained permission to attend

service in the prison church one Sunday, and while there contrived to get near the governor of the prison; and as the latter turned around, after kissing the cross in the hands of the priest, Muíshkin struck him in the face. For this offense he would, under ordinary circumstances, have been shot; but just at that time the attention of the Minister of the Interior was attracted to the Kharkóf central prison by the large number of deaths and cases of insanity among the politicals, and Professor Dobroslávin, a sanitary expert from St. Petersburg, was sent to the prison to make an investigation. He reported that it was not fit for human habitation, said that the cases of death and insanity among the political convicts were not surprising, and recommended that all the prisoners of that class be removed. In the light of this report it was presumed that Muíshkin was insane, or at least in an abnormal mental condition, at the time when he struck the governor of the prison, and he was not even tried for the offense. Shortly afterward he was sent, with all his fellow-prisoners, to the mines of Karâ. While they were in the city of Irkútsk on their way to the mines, one of the party, a man named Leo Dmokhófski, died. All the convicts in the party were permitted to attend the funeral in the prison church, and at the conclusion of the brief services Muíshkin felt impelled to say a few words over the body of his comrade. He referred to the high moral character of the dead man and his lovable personality, quoted a verse from the Russian liberal poet Nekrásof, and said, "Out of the ashes of this heroic man, and of other men like him, will grow the tree of liberty for Russia." At this point he was stopped by the chief of police, and at once taken back to his cell. For making what was regarded as a revolutionary speech within the sacred precincts of a church, and in the presence of the "images of the Holy Saints of the Lord," he was condemned to fifteen years more of penal servitude. In talking to me about Muíshkin, some of his comrades described him as

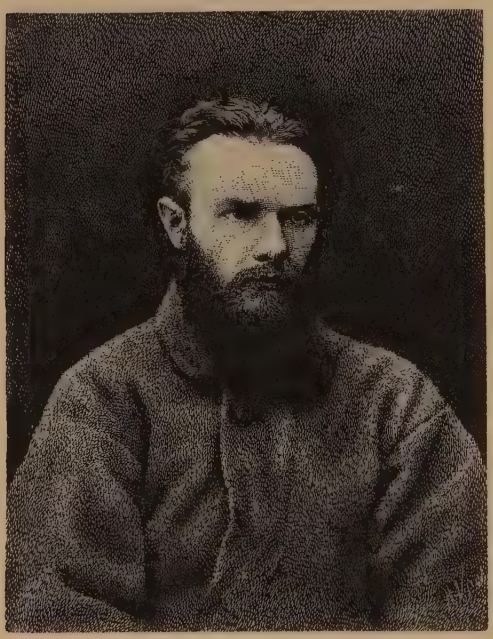
"a born orator who never made but two speeches in his life; one of them cost him ten years of penal servitude, and the other fifteen." Muíshkin himself said, after reaching the mines of Kará, that there was only one thing in his life which he regretted, and that was his speech over the dead body of his comrade Dmokhófski in Irkútsk. The world could not hear it, it did no good, it was merely the gratification of a personal impulse, and it added so many years to his term of penal servitude that, even if he should live out that term, he would be too old, when finally released, to work any more for the cause of Russian freedom.

MADAM BOGOMÓLETS.
(From a police photograph taken in convict dress.)

Muíshkin was one of the first of the eight prisoners who escaped from the Kará political prison in April, 1882, and he was recaptured, as I have said, in the seaport town of Vládivostók, to which American vessels come every summer. In 1883 he was sent back to St. Petersburg, with a party of other "dangerous" politicals, and incarcerated in the castle of Schlusselburg. In the autumn of 1885, fearing that, as a result of long solitary confinement, he was about to go insane, he struck one of the castle officers, with the hope that he would be put to death. The experiment that had failed in the Kharkóf

central prison succeeded in Schlusselburg. He was promptly tried by court-martial and shot.

In January, 1882, about three months before the escape of the eight convicts from the political prison at Karâ, two married women, Madam Kaválskaya and Madam Bogomólets, escaped from prison while passing through Irkútsk on their way to the mines. They were recaptured before they could get out of the city, and when they were brought back to their cells they were subjected to the customary personal search. These searches are always made by men, even when the prisoners are women, but in most cases they are conducted with decency and with the forms of respect. On this occasion, however, Colonel Soliviof, an adjutant of the governor-general, and a man of disreputable personal character, who happened to be in the prison when Madam Kaválskaya and Madam Bogomólets were brought back, conducted the search himself, and in the course of it not only insulted the women, but caused them to be stripped naked in his presence. He then had the audacity to go to a *kámera* in which were confined a number of male political convicts and boast of his exploit, remarking contemptuously, "Your political women are not much to look at." Among



N. SHCHEDRÍN.
(From a police photograph taken in convict dress.)

the convicts in the cell was a school-teacher named Shchedrín who, exasperated beyond endurance by the recital and the insulting taunt, sprung towards Soliviof, and, calling him a "despicable coward and liar," struck him in the face. For this insult to an officer, and for an attempt that he had made to escape, Shchedrín, upon his arrival at Karà, was chained to a wheelbarrow. In July, 1882, he, with the other "dangerous" political convicts named on page 237, was sent to St. Petersburg to be incarcerated in the castle of Schlusselburg. He was not released from the wheelbarrow, even when put into a vehicle; but as the roads were rough, and as he was constantly being bruised by the jolting of the barrow against him, it was finally found necessary to unchain him and lash the wheelbarrow on behind. Colonel Vinokúrof, inspector of exile transportation for Western Siberia, told me that he saw Shchedrín, with the wheelbarrow still lashed to his vehicle, passing through the province of Tobólsk.

After the hunger-strike in the Karà political prison in the summer of 1882 the life of the prisoners became a little more tolerable. They were again allowed to have books, money, and some warm clothing of their own, and they were permitted to walk two hours a day in the courtyard. The sanitary conditions of their life, however, continued to be very bad, little attention was paid to the sick, and the death-rate was abnormally high.[1]

Between the resignation of Colonel Kononóvich in 1881 and the appointment of Captain Nikólin in 1885 there were

[1] I have not been able to obtain a complete list of the prisoners who died, committed suicide, or went insane in the Karà political prison between 1879 and 1886, but I know of the following cases:

Deaths (all except one from prison consumption): Ishútinof, Krivoshéin, Zhúkof, Pópeko, Madam Lisófskaya, Tíkhonof, Rogatchóf, Dr. Véimar, Miss Armfeldt, and Madam Kutitónskaya. *Suicides:* Semyónofski (shot himself), Ródin (poisoned himself), Uspénski (hanged himself). *Insane:* Matvéivich, Zubkófski, Pózen, and Madam Kavaléfskaya (the last named recovered). At the time of our visit to the mines eight out of the eleven women in the women's political prison were sick.

seven changes of commandment[1] and the prison was managed in a hit-or-miss sort of way, according to the caprice of the man who was at the head of it. At one time the prisoners were allowed books, daily walks, money, and communication with their relatives, while at another time all these privileges were taken away from them. The partitions that were erected in the *kámeras* to reduce the size of the cells in 1882 were removed in 1884. The free command, which was abolished in 1881, was reëstablished in 1885. With every new officer there was a change in the regulations, and official whim or impulse took the place that should be occupied only by law. The best of the commandants, according to the testimony of the prisoners, was Burléi. Khaltúrin was brutally cruel, Shúbin was a man of little character, and Manáief was not only a drunkard, but a thief who destroyed hundreds of the prisoners' letters and embezzled 1900 *rúbles* of money sent to them by their relatives and friends in European Russia.[2] All of these officers were from the gendarmerie in Irkútsk. On the 16th of January, 1884, the political prison was put under the exclusive control of the imperial police, and early in 1885 Captain Nikólin was sent from St. Petersburg to take command of it.

Every word that Colonel Kononóvich said to Assistant Minister of the Interior Dúrnovo in 1881 with regard to the management of the political prison was shown by the subsequent course of events to be true. The Government forced an honest and humane man to resign, and sent, one after another, half a dozen cruel or incapable men to take his place, and it reaped, in tragedies and scandals, the harvest that might have been expected.

After we left Karà the state of affairs went from bad to

[1] Kononóvich, Pótulof, Khaltúrin, Burléi, Shúbin, Manáief, Burléi (a second time), and Nikólin.

[2] In January, 1887, three years later, Manáief was deprived of rank, orders, and nobility, and banished as a criminal to the territory of Yakútsk. (Newspapers *Sibír*, April 4, 1885, p. 8, and *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, Jan. 8, 1887, p. 4.)

worse. In March, 1888, Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, chief of the Russian prison administration, issued the following order with regard to the treatment of political convicts of the hard-labor class.

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR,
CHIEF PRISON ADMINISTRATION. No. 2926.
ST. PETERSBURG, March 1, 1888.

TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE ISLAND OF SAGHALÍN.

Your High Excellency: On the steamer Nízhni Nóvgorod of the volunteer fleet, which is to sail from the port of Odéssa on the 20th of March, 1888, there is a party of 525 convicts banished to the island of Saghalín. Among these criminals condemned to penal servitude are the political offenders Vassílli Volnóf, Sergéi Kúzin, Iván Meísner, and Stánislaus Khrenófski. In notifying you of this fact the Chief Prison Administration has the honor respectfully to request that you make arrangements to confine these political offenders, not in a separate group by themselves, but in the cells of other [common criminal] convicts. In making such arrangements it is desirable not to put more than two politicals into any one cell containing common criminals. In making the arrangements for confining these politicals in prison and employing them in work, no distinction whatever must be made between them and other criminals, except in the matter of surveillance, which must be of the strictest possible character. Neither must any difference be made between them and other convicts in respect to punishments inflicted for violations of prison discipline. You will not fail to inform the Chief Prison Administration of the manner in which the above political offenders are distributed on the island of Saghalín, and to forward reports with regard to their behavior.

[Signed] M. GÁLKINE WRÁSSKOY,
Director of the Chief Prison Administration.

Up to the time when the above order was issued some difference had been made in Siberian convict prisons between the treatment of political offenders and the treatment of burglars, highway robbers, and murderers. Both classes were confined in the same prisons, received the same food, and wore the same dress and leg-fetters, but the politicals were isolated in cells specially set apart for them, and were

virtually exempt from corporal punishment. They did not enjoy this exemption, however, by virtue of any law. Theoretically and legally they were liable to the same punishments that were inflicted upon common criminals—namely, twenty to one hundred blows with the "rods" or the *plet* [a heavy whip of hardened rawhide with a number of lashes]. In practice, however, it was the custom for the prison surgeon to make a *pro formâ* examination of the political offender who had rendered himself or herself liable to corporal punishment, and certify to the governor of the prison that, in his judgment, such offender was not strong enough to take a flogging without danger to life. Whether, as a matter of fact, this certificate was true or false, the governor always made it his warrant for substituting some other form of punishment. The Government did not venture at that time to use the whip upon the backs of educated and refined men and women, and the surgeon's certificate was a mere legal fiction, intended to relieve the prison administration from the necessity of actually enforcing its right to flog political convicts and, at the same time, to hold that right in abeyance. The issuance in March, 1888, of the order above set forth marked a new departure in the treatment of political convicts, and since that time they have been put into the same cells with thieves, burglars, and murderers, and have been flogged precisely as if they were common criminals. On the 16th of September, 1888, a little more than six months after the above order appeared, two of the very political offenders named in it—Vassílli Volnóf and Iván Meísner—were flogged at the penal establishment on the island of Saghalín as the result of a collision with the local authorities, caused by the failure of one of them to take off his cap to a petty official whom he happened to meet.

At the mines of Karâ, however, Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy's order had much more tragic consequences than these, inasmuch as it led there to the flogging to death of a cultivated

woman, the suicide of three of her companions, and an attempt at self-destruction on the part of more than twenty men. I have received from political exiles in Siberia four separate and independent accounts of the series of events that led up to this tragic climax, and it would be easy to compile from them a graphic and sensational story of "Siberian horrors." I have no desire, however, to exaggerate or color with imagination the facts of Siberian convict life, and I shall therefore lay aside these exile manuscripts, and offer the reader, instead, a translation of a private letter written to me by a Russian gentleman who lives near the mines of Kará, who is not an exile nor a political offender, who occupies a position that affords him every opportunity to know the truth, and who not only writes coolly and dispassionately, but confines himself to a bare statement of facts. The letter is as follows:

X———, EASTERN SIBERIA, April 11–23, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. KENNAN: The events herein described seem to me so important that although I have already written about them once I am going to repeat what I said for fear that my first letter has not reached you. I give you facts only, and I assure you, upon my honor, that they *are* facts, and facts with regard to which there is *no doubt or question.*

On the 5th of August, 1888, Baron Korf, governor-general of the Amúr,[1] paid a visit to the Karáconvict prisons. One of the political prisoners — Elizabeth Kaválskaya[2] — did not rise to her feet when the governor-general entered her cell, and upon his making some remark to her with regard to it she replied that she

[1] In the year 1884 Eastern Siberia was divided into two governor-generalships, one including the provinces of Irkútsk and Yeniséisk and the territory of Yakútsk, the other comprising the maritime territory, the Amúr territory, and the territory of the Trans-Baikál. This administrative rearrangement of the political divisions of the country took the mines of Karáout of the jurisdiction of the Irkútsk governor-general and subjected them to the authority of the governor-general of the Amúr, whose headquarters were at Khabarófka. [Author's note.]

[2] Elizabeth Kaválskaya was tried by court-martial at Kiev in May, 1881, and condemned as a revolutionist to penal servitude for life. While in Irkútsk, on her way to the mines of Kará, she made her escape, but was recaptured, stripped naked, and searched as described in this chapter. At the time to which this letter refers she was an

did not think it necessary to get up.[1] About a week later General Khoróshkin, the governor of the Trans-Baikál, ordered that she be taken to the central convict prison at Vérkhni Údinsk.[2] The execution of the order was attended with rough treatment and insult. Lieutenant-colonel Masiúkof, the gendarme officer in command of the political prisons,[3] intrusted the whole matter to a petty officer of the prison administration, named Bobrófski. The latter did not think it necessary to inform Madam Kaválskaya beforehand that she was to be taken away, but suddenly appeared in her cell with a file of soldiers at four o'clock in the morning, and dragged her, half-naked, out of bed. The soldiers tore off from her all of her own underclothes, making meanwhile various insulting remarks, and dressed her forcibly in the clothing provided by the Government for common criminal women.[4] At this she fainted, whereupon they laid her, still unconscious, upon a blanket, carried her down to the bank of the river, and put her into a small boat for transportation to Strétinsk.[5] [The water in the Shílka was so shallow at that time that the steamers were not running.] As a result of all this the women in the women's political prison demanded that the commandant Masiúkof, who had permitted such treatment of Madam Kaválskaya, be removed, and they enforced their demand with a hunger-strike [voluntary self-starvation] that lasted sixteen days. Although the men's political prison was secretly in communication with the prison of the women, the male convicts did

invalid, or semi-invalid, and all of my other informants agree that she had consumption. Her name must be carefully distinguished from that of Madam Kavaléfskaya, which it resembles. Both women were at Kará. [Author's note.]

[1] It is a rule in all Russian prisons that when an officer — and particularly an officer of high rank — enters a cell, every prisoner shall rise to his or her feet and stand in the attitude of attention. Madam Kaválskaya neither rose to her feet nor noticed in any way the governor-general's entrance. [Author's note.]

[2] The new prison described in chapter IV. of this volume. It is distant from Kará about 600 miles. [Author's note.]

[3] Appointed in place of Captain Nikólin since my visit to Kará. [Author's note.]

[4] At the time of our visit to Kará political convicts of both sexes were allowed, as a rule, to wear underclothing purchased by themselves with their own money, and to have their own bedding. Under the order issued by the prison administration on the 1st of March, 1888, they would not be entitled to this privilege, particularly if they were about to be subjected, as Madam Kaválskaya was, to "dungeon conditions." [Author's note.]

[5] The distance from Ust Kará to Strétinsk is about seventy miles up-stream, and Madam Kaválskaya must have spent at least three days in the small rowboat with the soldiers who had already stripped her naked and insulted her. [Author's note.]

not participate in this hunger-strike for the reason that, in their opinion, the action of the commandant Masiúkof was not the result of an evil intention, but rather of a weak character and general stupidity. [It is said that Masiúkof, really, is not a bad man.] Finally, at the expiration of sixteen days, the male political convicts persuaded the women to abandon their hunger-strike, and send memorials to the governor of the Trans-Baikál and the chief of the Irkútsk gendarmerie.[1] All of these memorials embodied a protest, on the part of the signers, against the violent treatment of Madam Kaválskaya, and some of them contained a demand that Masiúkof, as the person chiefly to blame for the trouble, should be removed. In due course of time the memorials were answered. The governor of the Trans-Baikál replied that the right to pass judgment on the acts of officials belonged exclusively to the Government which employed such officials, and that any person who should affront or insult a Government official would be held to legal accountability. The colonel of gendarmes in Irkútsk, who was Masiúkof's direct superior, replied that he expected to come to Kará soon, and that he would then make a personal investigation. Some weeks later this officer — Colonel von Plótto — did go to Kará, instituted there an inquiry into the

ELIZABETH KAVÁLSKAYA.
(From a police photograph taken in convict dress.)

[1] Political exiles and convicts are forbidden to address to the authorities a collective petition, or to take joint action of any kind with regard to any subject, but this prohibition does not extend to a number of separate individual memorials, provided they are not identical in terms. [Author's note.]

circumstances of the case, and then promised the politicals that, at the expiration of a certain fixed period, Masiúkof should be removed. The specified time elapsed, and Masiúkof still continued to hold his position as commandant of the political prisons. Then began in the women's prison a second hunger-strike, which was supported this time by the convicts in the men's prison, and which lasted twenty-two days. It ended in Masiúkof's promising that within three months he would leave Karáof his own accord. During these three months the women refused to send or receive anything that would have to pass through his hands — that is, they gave up correspondence with their relatives, and declined to take money, books, etc., sent to Masiúkof for them. The three months ended August 31, 1889. [You see the affair had dragged along for a whole year.] Madam Sigída [Hope Sigída] then tried to shame Masiúkof into leaving Karáby striking him in the face.[1] She was at once seized and thrown into the common criminal prison of Ust Kará[that is, separated from her companions]. Immediately after this, on the 1st of September, 1889, began the third hunger-strike in the women's political prison, which was finally broken up by the removal to the common criminal prison of Miss Kalúzhnaya, Miss Smirnítskaya, and Madam Kavaléfskaya. Madam Kavaléfskaya and Madam Sigída continued for a time to starve themselves, but were fed by force. Masiúkof made a report upon this series of occurrences, and, as a result of it, a proclamation was received from the governor of the Trans-Baikál and read to the political convicts, saying that, in view of the disorders at Kará, the governor-general had directed the commandant of the political prisons to resort to various severe disciplinary measures, among them corporal punishment. At the same time the governor or director of the Karápenal establishment[2] received an order from Governor-general Korf directing him to punish Hope Sigída with 100 blows of the "rods" in the presence of the surgeon, but without previous surgical examination.[3] The surgeon of the Karáprison hospital, Dr. Gúrvich, thereupon gave notice officially that, in his opinion, Madam Sigída could not endure so much as

[1] The other accounts that I have received from Siberia differ as to the circumstances in which this blow was given and the reasons for it. The precise facts, probably, will never be known.

[2] The officer who had taken the place filled at the time of my visit by Major Pótulof. [Author's note.]

[3] This was intended apparently to preclude the possibility of a report on the part of the surgeon that the punishment would endanger life. [Author's note.]

a single blow, and that, furthermore, since he was not legally obliged to witness punishments inflicted by administrative order and without the sentence of a court, he should decline to be present. [It should be noted here that there had been no formal inquiry into the circumstances of Madam Sigída's case and no examination [*slédstvie*].] The governor of the Kará penal establishment, Gomulétski, did not at once execute the order of the governor-general, but reported to his immediate superior the statement and declaration of the prison surgeon. Baron Korf thereupon directed that the previous order be executed without the presence of the surgeon. Gomulétski still put off the punishment, Masiúkof refused to take charge of the affair, and finally Bobrófski — the same officer who had ill-treated Madam Kaválskaya — was brought from Nérchinski Zavód to serve as executioner. [I forgot to mention in its proper place the fact that after the Kaválskaya affair Bobrófski was promoted to be assistant superintendent of the convict prisons in the whole Nérchinsk mining district.]

On the 6th of November, 1889, Bobrófski arrived at Kará, and immediately carried the order of Governor-general Korf into execution.

Many stories are in circulation with regard to the repulsive details of this infernal act of cruelty, but I will not write them to you because I cannot answer for the truthfulness of them. After the execution Madam Sigída, in a state of unconsciousness, was carried back into the prison, and on the 8th or 9th of November she died — I think from poison. On the night of the 10th Marie Kavaléfskaya, Marie Kalúzhnaya, and Nadézhda Smirnítskaya, who also had taken poison, were brought from their cells to the prison hospital, and died there, one after another.[1] A few days later — November 15th — Dr. Gúrvich was summoned by Masiúkof to the men's political prison to treat twenty more con-

[1] Miss Marie Kalúzhnaya, aged twenty-three, was the daughter of a merchant in Odéssa, and had been condemned to twenty years of penal servitude. Her story may be found in the article entitled "Prison Life of the Russian Revolutionists," in *The Century Magazine* for December, 1887, p. 289. Miss Hope Smirnítskaya, aged thirty-seven, was the daughter of a Russian priest, and at the time of her arrest — ten or twelve years ago — was a student in one of the high schools for women [*vuíshi zhénski kúrsi*] in St. Petersburg. She had been sentenced to fifteen years of penal servitude. ["Russian State Prisoners," *Century Magazine* for March, 1888, p. 759.] The story and portrait of Madam Kavaléfskaya were given in chapter VII of this volume. [Author's note.]

victs who had poisoned themselves. All were saved except Iván Kalúzhni [brother of the young girl who committed suicide on the 10th], and Sergéi Bobókhof, both of whom died on the morning of November 16th. It is said that, at first, the authorities lost their heads and became demoralized; but the governor of the Trans-Baikál soon took energetic measures to prevent the affair, as far as possible, from becoming known. He went to Karáself, as did also the territorial procureur and the colonel of gendarmes; but what happened afterward I do not know.

I was unable to write you more promptly with regard to this affair on account of circumstances beyond my control.

With sincere respect, I am yours

N——— N———.

Hope Sigída, the heroine of this terrible prison tragedy, was the daughter of a well-known merchant named Malaksiánof, who lived and was engaged in business in the city of Táganrog in European Russia. She was born there in the year 1864 and was therefore, at the time of her death, about twenty-five years of age. She received a good education, and was graduated from the women's gymnasium in Táganrog with the highest honors and the gold medal for the year. It was her intention to continue her studies in one of the high schools for women in St. Petersburg, but, soon after her graduation, her father failed in business, and she was forced to become a teacher in one of the public schools in order to help to support her family. In 1884 she was married to Mr. A. S. Sigída, an officer of the Táganrog Circuit Court. Both she and her husband were revolutionists, and in 1885 they, with a number of others, established in Táganrog a secret printing-office, devoted to the dissemination of revolutionary ideas. On the 23d of January, 1886, this printing-establishment was discovered and captured by the police, and Madam Sigída, with many others, was arrested and thrown into prison. She was held in solitary confinement from January, 1886, to October, 1887—almost two years—and was then tried, found guilty, and sentenced to a long term of penal servitude at the mines of Karáá.

A lady in Russia who knew Madam Sigída well, and who was at one time closely associated with her, has written me the following estimate of her character:

Hope Sigída was a woman naturally endowed with great mental ability and intrepidity. In her appearance and behavior there was nothing whatever to suggest the blue-stocking, or the "Nihilist," and for that reason all who knew her merely in her official capacity as a teacher in the public schools were astonished when she was arrested in the secret printing-office. But, apart from the official side of her character, there was another, never seen by the curious eyes of the uninitiated. She was a conspirator. You know, Mr. Kennan, how innocent, and even praiseworthy, are the objects that a Russian has to attain by means of conspiracy. If you try to help your comrades and friends by bringing them together at intervals for study and discussion, the Government immediately invents a new and previously unheard-of crime called "organizing circles for self-cultivation." If you try to teach poor peasants to read, and to instruct them with regard to their rights and duties as human beings, you are accused by the Government of another "crime" — viz: "having dealings with peasant laborers." Of course, Hope Sigída had every reason to be a conspirator. She was a woman of great independence and self-reliance, she had a rarely developed sense of justice, she was intelligent and cultivated in the highest degree, she was absolutely fearless in the domain of thought, and she was a fanatical idealist. She naturally played a leading part, therefore, both in the gymnasium and in the "circle for self-cultivation," and by all of her associates in those organizations she was greatly beloved. In personal appearance Madam Sigída was very attractive. She was a rather slender brunette of medium height, with an oval face full of expression and energy, and remarkably beautiful eyes. She was always dressed neatly and with taste, but very simply.

In February, 1890, soon after the receipt in Europe of the first news of the Kará tragedy, the St. Petersburg *Nóvoe Vrémya* and the *Journal de St. Petersbourg* [the official organ of the Russian Foreign Office] declared that "the reports of the flogging to death of Madam Sigída and the suicide of three other female prisoners at Kará, in the province of the

Amúr, are unqualified falsehoods."[1] The denial was doubtless inspired by the chief of the prison administration or the Minister of the Interior, but it was none the less futile and ill-advised, because the salient facts of the case were at that time known, and known through official statements and admissions, to at least half the population of Eastern Siberia. Only a month later the chief of the prison administration himself admitted the flogging, but pleaded justification. He declared that "Kennan and others etherealized Nihilist women out of all recognition," that the political exiles and convicts "brought troubles upon themselves by being excitable and intractable" and that "an example was necessary."[2]

MADAM SUKHOMLÍNA.
(Went voluntarily to the mines with her husband in 1888.)

In June, 1891, a gentleman living in a European city wrote to the editor of *The Century Magazine*, apparently for publication, a letter upon this subject, in which he gave what seemed to be an officially inspired version of the facts; and, as I have not been able to find any other defense of the action of the East-Siberian

[1] Cable despatch dated London, February 20, 1890.

[2] Cable despatch dated St. Petersburg, March 13, 1890.

officials in this case, I submit the letter for what it may be worth.

X—— Hotel, X——, June 3, 1891.

To the Editor of the Century Magazine:

Sir: As your contributor Mr. George Kennan and other persons still circulate stories as to flogging in Russia, and insist that Madam Sigída was flogged to death, I ask space for a few words in reply. More women have been flogged in the United States than in Russia during the last ten years. Indeed, I doubt if there is any instance of flogging a Russian lady except Madam Sigída. Her case was as follows:

In the year 1888 the discipline of the prisoners in Siberia being very bad, an ordinance was adopted rendering them liable to flogging for grave breaches of discipline. Good conduct was, of course, all that was necessary to avoid punishment. The prisoners at Kará, however, came to a resolution that if any of their number was flogged they would all commit suicide. Shortly after this Madam Sigída sent for the governor of the jail, on the pretext of important business, and on his arrival she struck him in the face. There could scarcely be a grosser or more unprovoked breach of discipline, especially as such a blow is considered a greater insult in Russia than elsewhere. [This was more than a year after the ordinance.] That Madam Sigída was a healthy woman at the time is evident from the fact that she had just gone through a "hunger-strike" which lasted either fourteen or seventeen days. No delicate woman could have endured this. But as she was pulled down by long fasting the prison doctor refused to permit her to be flogged until she had recovered her strength. The punishment was accordingly postponed, and she was not flogged until about three weeks after the "hunger-strike" was over. The flogging would not have been considered severe if inflicted by the White Caps or Regulators of America. Three days afterward Madam Sigída, and three female companions who had not been flogged, died, and the male prisoners also took poison, though with less fatal results. It is admitted that the other three women committed suicide. It is admitted that Madam Sigída was one of those who had agreed to commit suicide if any prisoner was flogged, and it is admitted that she died on the same day with the suicides. Yet, in the face of all this, an attempt has been made to persuade the American public that she was flogged to death. It is not

alleged that the prison doctor ascribed her death to the flogging. It is not alleged that any one who saw her after the flogging saw her terribly cut up and fainting from weakness, or giving any other indication of fatal flogging. The only evidence that the flogging, which she actually courted, was unduly severe, is that she died in three days afterward — the day when the other prisoners committed suicide. Your obedient servant,

C—— M——.

There seems to me to be very little in the quibble that Madam Sigída was not flogged to death because, so far as we know, she did not actually die under the lash. If Mr. C—— M——'s younger sister, a cultivated, generous, impulsive, and patriotic young Irish girl, we will say, had been sent to the Andaman Islands for twenty years as a hard-labor convict because she had helped to maintain a secret "Home Rule" printing-office in Belfast; if, driven to despair by cruel treatment of herself and her companions in penal servitude, she had starved herself twenty-two days in order to bring about, by the only means of compulsion open to her, the removal of the officer responsible for such cruel treatment; if, finally, she had been fed by force through a rubber tube; if, in the abnormal mental condition that would naturally be caused by so terrible an experience of hunger and outrage, she had committed a breach of prison discipline; if she had then been stripped, held by the wrists on a soldier's back, and flogged until she fainted; and if, at last, in an agony of helplessness, shame, and despair, she had taken her own life, I do not think that Mr. C—— M—— would regard it as an overstatement if I should say that his sister had been "flogged to death." But the question is unimportant. It seems to me that, so far as moral responsibility is concerned, Madam Sigída and her three companions were just as truly put to death by the East-Siberian officials as if their throats had been cut in the prison courtyard by the prison executioner. You may so treat a high-spirited woman, if she is wholly in your power, that she will cer-

A RELIGIOUS SERVICE AT AN OROZHÁNNI ENCAMPMENT.

tainly commit suicide if she can; but the mere fact that she dies by her own hand does not relieve you from moral accountability for her death.

Since the tragedy of 1889 communication with the political convicts at Karáhas become more difficult, and all that I know of their life is that it has changed again for the worse. The order issued by the prison administration on the 1st of March, 1888, has been carried into execution, and no dis-

PEASANTS THRESHING GRAIN ON THE ICE.

tinction is now made between politicals and common criminals. Many of the former—but how many I do not know—have been transferred from Karâ to the famous and dreaded mine of Akatúi, in the Nérchinsk district, where

they live and work with ordinary felons of the hard-labor class. This is a return to the method of treating politicals that was practised more than forty years ago, when the gifted Russian novelist Dostoyéfski was sent to Siberia in chains, and worked and was flogged with common criminals in the convict prison of Omsk. Most intelligent Russian officials are now ashamed of *that* episode in the history of their literature and their Government. The time, I hope, is not far distant when they will be even more ashamed of flogging women, chaining school-teachers to wheelbarrows, and subjecting political convicts generally to treatment from which they gladly escape by suicide.

On the 12th of November Mr. Frost and I left the mines of Kará forever, and with glad hearts turned our faces, at last, homeward. As we drove away, with Major Pótulof, from the Lower Diggings, two political convicts, in long gray overcoats, who were walking towards the prison at a distance of one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards from the road, saw and recognized us, and as we passed they stopped, removed their caps, and made towards us what the Russians call a "waist bow"—a bow so low that the body is bent at right angles from the waist. It was their last mute farewell to the travelers who had shown them sympathy and pity, and it is the last remembrance I have of the mines of Kará.

We spent that night in the house of the overseer of the Ust Kará prison, at the mouth of the river, and on the following morning remounted our horses for another ride across the mountains to Strétinsk. Major Pótulof opened a bottle of white Crimean wine after we had climbed into our saddles, and, pouring out a glassful for each of us and for himself, said, "Here 's to the beginning of a journey to America!" We drank the stirrup-cup with bright anticipations of a return to home and friends, thanked Major Pótulof for his kindness and hospitality, promised to apprise him by telegraph of our safe arrival at Strétinsk, and rode away into the mountains.

The country lying along the Shílka, in the vicinity of Karâ, is inhabited, away from the river, only by a tribe of

RETURNING FROM KARÁ ON THE ICE OF THE SHÍLKA RIVER.

half-wild nomads, known to the Russians as "Orozhánni." They acknowledge allegiance to the Russian Government, pay taxes, and are nominally Christians; but they rarely come into the Russian settlements, unless brought there by

a desire to exchange their furs or reindeer for knives, kettles, or tobacco. The Russian priest at Kará visits them from time to time to conduct religious services; and the picture of an Orozhánni encampment during one of these services, on page 273, is from a photograph made and given to me by a political exile in Nérchinsk.

For two days after leaving Kará we rode on horseback across the rugged, forest-clad mountains that skirt the river Shílka, suffering constantly from cold, hunger, and fatigue. On the third day we reached Botí, the village from which we had taken our horses, and found most of the population engaged in threshing out grain with flails on the ice. The peasants manifested great pleasure at seeing us, and said we had been gone so long that they had almost given us up for lost. The excitement and anxiety of our life at Kará, and the hardships of our ride across the mountains in a temperature below zero had so exhausted my strength that when we reached Botí my pulse was running at 120, and I could hardly sit in the saddle. I should not have been able to ride on horseback another day. Fortunately, we found the river at Botí solidly frozen, and were able to continue our journey in sledges on the ice. Late on the night of November 16th, tired, half-starved, and deadly cold, we reached the town of Strétinsk, and found food, shelter, and rest in the little cabin of the young peasant Záblikof, where we had left most of our baggage when we set out on horseback for the mines of Kará.

CHAPTER IX

THE SILVER MINES OF NÉRCHINSK

MR. FROST and I reached Strétinsk on our return from the mines of Karâ in a state of physical exhaustion that made rest an absolute necessity. Excitement, privation, and exposure without sufficient food, to intense cold had so reduced my strength that I could not walk a hundred yards without fatigue, and the mere exertion of putting on a fur overcoat would quicken my pulse twenty or thirty beats. It did not seem to me prudent, in this weak condition, to undertake a ride of six hundred miles, in springless *telégas*, through the wild and lonely region in which are situated the Nérchinsk silver mines. For three days, therefore, we rested quietly in the log-house of the young peasant Záblikof, on the bank of the Shílka River, eating all the nourishing food we could get, sleeping as much as possible, and bracing ourselves up with quinine and Liebig's extract of beef.

Sunday morning, finding my strength measurably restored, I walked across the ice of the river to the town of Strétinsk and called upon the *zasedátel*, or district inspector of police, for the purpose of obtaining horses. Through the greater part of the Nérchinsk silver-mining district regular post-roads are lacking; but we had received authority by telegraph from the governor of the province to ask the coöperation of the police in hiring horses from the peasants along our route, and I had letters of introduction to most of the police officials from Major Pótulof. The *zasedátel* received me courteously, and at once made the

necessary requisition for horses, but said he must warn me that an epidemic of smallpox prevailed in all the region between Strétinsk and the mines, and that it would be unsafe for us to sleep at night in the peasants' houses, or even to go into them for food. This unwelcome intelligence discouraged us more than anything that we had yet heard. The journey to the mines would involve hardship enough at best, and if, in a temperature that was almost constantly below zero, we could not enter a peasant's house to obtain food or shelter without risk of taking the smallpox, we should be between the horns of a very unpleasant dilemma. I was strongly tempted to proceed westward to the town of Nérchinsk, and enter the mining district from that side; but such a course would greatly increase the distance to be traveled, and finding that Mr. Frost was willing to share with me the risk of infection, I finally decided to adhere to our original plan. Sunday afternoon we loaded our baggage into a small, shallow *teléga*, lashed on behind a bag of frozen bread upon which we could not comfortably sit, and set out, with two horses and a ragged, low-spirited driver, for the Alexandrófski Zavód and the mine of Algachí.

The silver mines of Nérchinsk are not situated, as one might suppose them to be, at or near the town of Nérchinsk, but are scattered over a wild, desolate, mountainous region, thousands of square miles in extent, known as "The Nérchinsk Silver-mining District." This district is coterminous, on its southern side, with the frontier line of Mongolia, and occupies the greater part of the irregular triangle formed by the rivers Shílka and Argún, just above the point where they unite to form the Amúr. The existence of silver and lead ore in this region was known even to the prehistoric aborigines of Siberia, and traces of their primitive mining operations were found near the Argún by the first Russian explorers of the country. In the year 1700 Greek mining engineers in the employ of the Russian Government founded the Nérchinski Zavód, or Nérchinsk Works, near the Mongolian frontier, and before the end of the century shafts

had been sunk in more than twenty places between the Argún and the Shílka, and eight *zavóds*, or smelting-furnaces, had been constructed for the reduction of the ore. The mines were worked at first by peasants brought from other parts of Siberia and forcibly colonized at points where their labor was needed, but in 1722 their places were taken to some extent by hard-labor convicts deported from the prisons of European Russia. Since that time the mines have been manned partly by colonized peasants and partly by common criminals of the penal-servitude class. With the exception of Poles and a few of the Decembrist conspirators of 1825, political convicts have not been sent to the Nérchinsk silver-mining district until within the last two or three years. Thousands of Polish insurgents were transported thither after the unsuccessful insurrection of 1863,[1] but since that time political offenders, as a rule, have been sent to the mines of Kará.

Our first objective point, after leaving Strétinsk, was the Alexandrófski Zavód, or Alexander Works, distant in a southwesterly direction about one hundred and twenty-five miles. The "Works," from which the place originally derived a part of its name and all of its importance, were abandoned many years ago and gradually fell into ruins, but the village attached to them still lingers in a moribund condition and now sustains a small convict prison. As we wished to examine this prison, and as the Alexandrófski Zavód, moreover, was a convenient point of departure for the once famous but subsequently abandoned mine of Akatúi, we decided to make there a short stay. The weather when we left Strétinsk was cold and cloudy, with a raw wind from the northeast. The low, desolate mountains between which we traveled were whitened by a thin film of snow, but the

[1] According to Maxímof, who had access to the official records, the number of Poles exiled to Siberia between the years 1863 and 1866 was 18,623. Of this number 8199—including 4252 nobles—were sent to Eastern Siberia and 7109 of them were condemned to penal servitude. Nearly all of the last-named class went to the Nérchinsk silver mines. Maxímof, "Siberia and Penal Servitude," Vol. III, pp. 80, 81. St. Petersburg: 1871.

road was bare and dry, and we were soon covered with dust thrown up by the wheels of our vehicle. By the time we had made the first stretch of twenty miles we were cold, tired, and hungry enough to seek rest and refreshment; but the village where we stopped to change horses had a deserted, pestilence-stricken appearance, and we did not even dare to alight from our *teléga*. Cold and hunger were preferable to smallpox. Our driver tried to reassure us by declaring that the disease was of a mild type, but Mr. Frost expressed a fear that it might resemble Siberian vermin in being comparatively "mild" and harmless to natives but death to foreigners. When we reached the village of Kopún, at the end of the second stretch, it was beginning to grow dark, the mercury had fallen nearly to zero, and I was so deadly cold that I could hardly move my stiffened and benumbed limbs.

"I can't stand this any longer," I said to Mr. Frost. "One might as well get the smallpox as freeze to death. I'm going to knock at the door of this house and ask whether they have the confounded disease or not. If they say they have n't, I'm going in to warm myself and get something to eat."

I knocked at the door and it was opened by a pale-faced, weary-looking woman.

"Will you be kind enough to tell me whether you have smallpox in the house?" I inquired.

"Yes," she replied; "we have."

That was enough. I did not wait for particulars, but hastened back to the *teléga*, and said to Mr. Frost that, as we seemed to be between the devil and the deep sea, I was going for the bread-bag. Another disappointment, however, awaited me. The loaves not only were frozen to the consistency of geodes, but were completely covered with dust and sand that had been thrown up by the wheels of the *teléga*, and had sifted through the loose meshes of the homespun linen bag. I gave one of them to Mr. Frost, took another myself, and for three-quarters of an hour we

sat there in the deepening twilight, shivering with cold and gnawing frozen bread, while we waited for horses.

"O Kennan!" said Mr. Frost with a groan, "if I only had some warm milk-toast!"

But it was of no use to wish for such a luxury as warm milk-toast in the silver-mining district of Nérchinsk. What we had to do was to warm and aërate with imagination the food that we could get, and congratulate ourselves upon having escaped the smallpox. I proposed, however, that we should sit on the bread throughout the next stretch, and thus protect it to some extent from dust and the refrigerating influence of an arctic climate. The proposition was approved and adopted, but the result was merely to exchange one sort of discomfort for another.

Horses were forthcoming at last, and after another long, cold, and dreary ride we reached, about nine o'clock at night, the comfortable station of Shelapúgina, on the post-road between the town of Nérchinsk and the Nérchinski Zavód. I did not feel able to go any further that day, and as the postmaster assured us that there had never been a case of smallpox in the station, we brought in our baggage, drank tea, and, without removing our clothing, lay down as usual on our sheepskin overcoats upon the floor of the travelers' room. Monday morning, refreshed by a good night's sleep and a breakfast of tea, fresh bread, and fat soup, we resumed our journey and rode all day through shallow valleys, between low, treeless, and dreary-looking mountains, towards the Alexandrófski Zavód. The sky was clear and the sunshine inspiriting; but the mercury had fallen to fifteen degrees below zero, our horses were white and shaggy with frost, the jolting of our vehicle made it difficult to keep our furs wrapped closely about us, and we suffered severely all day from cold. About half-past six o'clock in the evening we stopped for an hour to drink tea in a village whose name, Kavwíkuchigazamúrskaya, seemed to me to contain more letters than the place itself had inhabitants. We met there a young technologist

from St. Petersburg, who had been sent to the mines to teach the convicts the use of dynamite, and who was on his way home. He gave us a most gloomy account of life in the silver-mining district. The convict prisons, he said, were "the very worst in the Empire"; the officials were "cruel and incompetent"; the convicts were "ill-treated, beaten by everybody, with or without reason, forced to work when sick, and killed outright with explosives which the overseers were too ignorant or too careless to handle with proper precautions." He referred to the mining authorities with bitterness, as if his personal relations with them had been unpleasant; and, in view of that fact, it seemed to me prudent to take his statements with some allowance. I give them for what they may be worth in connection with my own later investigations.

Just before midnight on Tuesday we reached the village of Makárovo, 112 miles from Strétinsk, and stopped for the night in what was known as the *zémski kvartír*, a log house occupied by a peasant family whose duty it was to give food and shelter to traveling officials. As soon as possible after drinking tea we went to bed, Mr. Frost lying on the floor, while I stretched myself out on a bench near one of the windows. The room was intolerably hot, the pine logs of the walls in the vicinity of the oven emitted a strong resinous odor, the air was close and heavy, and for a long time I could not get to sleep. I had just lost consciousness, as it seemed to me, when I was aroused by a loud and prolonged "Cock-a-doo-oo-dle-doo-oo!" which proceeded, apparently, from a point distant only a few inches from my head. Upon investigating this singular phenomenon I discovered that the space under the bench upon which I lay had been inclosed with slats and turned into a chicken-coop. A large cock, thinking, doubtless, that it must be near morning, had put his head out and up through the slats, and crowed lustily in my very ear. This performance he repeated, at short intervals, throughout the remainder of the night, so that, although I finally took a position as

far away from him as possible on the floor, I could get little rest. I have slept in Siberian cabins with colts, dogs, cattle, and sheep, but one wakeful Shanghai rooster will make

THE ALEXANDRÓFSKI ZAVÓD.

more disturbance in a small room at night than a whole ark-load of quadrupeds.

We reached the Alexandrófski Zavód at ten o'clock Tuesday morning, and found it to be a dreary, dead-and-alive Siberian village of two or three hundred inhabitants, situated in the middle of a flat, uncultivated steppe, with a rickety, tumble-down bridge in the foreground, and low,

bare, snow-covered mountains in the distance. The convict prison, to which we were conducted by the warden, Mr. Fomin, proved to be nothing more than a *bogadiélnia*, or infirmary, to which were sent hopelessly disabled and broken-down convicts from other parts of the Nérchinsk mining district. The main building, which is shown on the right of the bridge in the illustration, on page 284, is a one-story log structure of the usual Karà type, and contained, at the time of our visit, 137 prisoners. It had been standing, the warden said, about half a century, and its sanitary condition, as might have been expected, was bad. The floors were dirty, the air in the cells was heavy and vitiated, and the corridors were filled with the stench of privies and neglected *paráshas*. In two of the *kámeras* we found lunatics living with their sane comrades. The hospital attached to the prison is small, but it was not overcrowded, and it seemed to me to be clean and in fairly good condition. The coarse linen on the cot beds was dirty, but the *feldsher*, or hospital-steward, said that this was not his fault. The supply of bed-linen was scanty, and he did the best he could with what was furnished him. He seemed to be very much gratified when I told him that his hospital, although small, impressed me as being the cleanest and best-managed institution of the kind that I had seen in the Trans-Baikál.

After having inspected the prison, Mr. Frost and I returned to Mr. Fomin's comfortable house, where we met the *isprávnik* of Nérchinski Zavód, a tall, well-built, good-looking man about forty years of age, who was making a tour of his district. He was very pleasant and communicative, talked with us frankly about the Nérchinsk mines, and said, without hesitation, that the Government's management of them was "clumsy, incompetent, and wasteful." He thought that it would be much better for the country if the whole Nérchinsk silver-mining district were thrown open to private enterprise. Many of the engineers in the employ of the Government were either corrupt or incapable, and the

mines did not produce half as much silver as they ought. As an illustration of the existing state of affairs he referred to two gold placers in his district, which had been carefully examined by engineers of the Tsar's cabinet[1] and had been pronounced worthless. They had subsequently been sold or granted by the Tsar to private individuals, and had then produced 600 *puds*, or more than 27,000 pounds of pure gold. The *isprávnik* intimated, although he did not explicitly say, that the Government engineers who examined the placers and declared them worthless were in league with the private individuals who desired to obtain title to them; and that the proceeds of this robbery of the Crown were shared by the parties to the corrupt agreement. I have no doubt that such was the case. The Tsar himself is constantly robbed and defrauded by the officials to whom he intrusts the management of his Siberian property.

After a good dinner of soup, fish, roasted grouse, vegetables, and compote of fruits, with *vódka* and two or three kinds of wine, which Mr. Fomin set out in honor of his guests, the *isprávnik*, the warden, Mr. Frost, and I started with two *tróikas* of horses for the mine of Akatúi, which was distant about twelve miles. This mine had long before been abandoned by the Government and had filled with water; but I was particularly anxious to see how it was situated, partly because it once had been the most dreaded place of punishment in all Siberia, and partly because the Government was then making preparations to transport to it all of the political convicts at the mines of Kará. The road ran across the desolate steppe to the foot of a low mountain range six or eight miles northwest of the Zavód, and then entered a shallow valley between rounded and perfectly barren hills, about a thousand feet in height,

[1] Nearly all the mines in this part of the Trans-Baikál belong to the Tsar in person and are known as the "cabinet mines." How the Tsar acquired title to them I do not know. An educated Russian gentleman of my acquaintance began the compilation of a work that he intended to publish abroad under the title, "The Origin of the Wealth of the Románofs," but he was sent to Siberia before he could complete his investigation.

whose snowy slopes limited the vision in every direction. As we ascended this valley the hills shut it in more and more closely, until, a mile and a half or two miles beyond the small village of Akatúi, it became a secluded and inexpressibly dreary glen, where there were no signs of life except the stunted and leafless bushes which here and there

OLD POLITICAL PRISON AT THE MINE OF AKATÚI.

broke the uniform whiteness of the snow-covered hills. It seemed to me that I had never seen a place so lonely, so cheerless, so isolated from all the living world. It might have been a valley among the arctic hills of Greenland near the Pole.

"Here is the old political prison," said the *isprávnik;* and as he spoke we stopped in front of a peculiar, half-ruined log building, which had once apparently been covered with stucco or plaster, and through the middle of which ran a high-arched gateway. On the flanks of this structure, and forty or fifty yards from it, stood two weather-beaten prisons of stuccoed brick, one of them roofless, and both gradually falling into ruins. It was evident that these prisons had once been surrounded by a stockade, and that the log building with the arched gateway was the corps-de-garde through which admission was had to the inclosure. The stockade, however, had long before disappeared, the iron gratings had been removed from the windows, and little remained to indicate to a careless observer the real nature

of the ruins or the purposes that they had served. I alighted from my *teléga* and entered the prison on the right of the corps-de-garde, thinking that I might discover a mural inscription left by some lonely and unhappy prisoner, or perhaps find one of the iron rings or staples in the wall to which refractory convicts were chained. Every scrap of iron, however, that could be used elsewhere had been stripped from the building; the floors had rotted away; the plaster had fallen; and nothing whatever remained to suggest to one's imagination the unwritten history of the gloomy prison, or bear witness to the cruelties and tragedies that had given to Akatúi its evil fame. The prison on the left of the corps-de-garde was in a much better state of repair than the other, and would doubtless have repaid a careful examination; but its windows were fastened, its heavy plank doors were secured with padlocks, and the warden said he did not know where the keys were or how we could gain admission. The entrance to the mine of Akatúi was on the hillside, five or six hundred feet above the bottom of the valley, and we could just see, in the deepening twilight, the outlines of a small tool-house that stood near the mouth of the shaft. At an earlier hour of the day I should have proposed to visit it; but the darkness of night was already gathering in the valley, the air was bitterly cold, and as the *isprávnik* and the warden seemed anxious to return to the Zavód I was obliged to content myself with such an examination of Akatúi as could be made in the vicinity of the prisons. Lúnin, one of the Decembrist conspirators of 1825, lived and died in penal servitude at this mine, and somewhere in the neighborhood lie buried many of the Polish patriots sent to Akatúi after the insurrection of 1863. I was unable, however, to find their graves. The Russian Government does not take pains to perpetuate the memory of the political offenders whom it tortures to death in its Siberian prisons, and over the moldering bodies of most of them there is not so much as a mound. Since my return from Siberia a new prison

has been erected in the dreary valley of Akatúi, and to it have been transported many political convicts from Kará. The intention of the Government is to pump the water out of the abandoned mine and set the politicals at work in its damp and gloomy galleries. The change, of course, will be for the worse. If there is in Siberia a more lonely, a more cheerless, a more God-forsaken place than Kará, it is the snowy, secluded valley of Akatúi.

At a late hour Tuesday night we returned to the Alexandrófski Zavód, and about noon on Wednesday, after a refreshing night's sleep and a good breakfast, we set out for the mine of Algachí, distant about twenty-two miles. There was little, if any, change in the appearance of the country, as we made our way slowly into the silver-mining district. One range of low, barren, round-topped mountains succeeded another, like great ocean swells, with hardly a sign of life or vegetation, except in the shallow haystack-dotted valleys. From the summit of the last divide that we crossed before reaching Algachí, the country, which we could see for thirty miles, looked like a boundless ocean suddenly frozen solid in the midst of a tremendous Cape Horn gale when the seas were running mountain-high. Far down in a snowy trough between two of these mighty surges we could just make out a little cluster of unpainted log-houses, which our driver said was the mining village of Algachí. I wondered, as we stopped for a moment on the summit to look at it, whether in all the world one could find a settlement situated in a more dreary and desolate spot. As far as the eye could see there was not a tree, nor a dark object of any kind, to break the ghastly whiteness of the rolling ocean of snowy mountains; and it was not hard to imagine that the village itself was nothing more than a little collection of floating driftwood, caught in the trough of the sea at the moment when the tremendous billows were suddenly turned to snow and ice. We descended the steep slope of the mountain to the village by a stony, zigzag road, entered a long, dirty, straw-littered street between two rows of un-

painted wooden houses, passed through several herds of cattle that sheepskin-coated boys were driving in from pasture, and finally stopped, amid a crowd of curious idlers, in front of the *zémski kvartír*, or official lodging-house, where we intended to spend the night. It was already five o'clock,—too late for a visit to the prison or an inspection of the mine,—and as soon as we had brought in our baggage and explained to the people of the house who we were, we set about the preparation of supper. Our resources were rather limited, but our peasant hostess furnished a steaming *samovár* with a little milk and butter, Mr. Frost produced, with triumph, a can of Californian preserved peaches, which he said he had bought in Strétinsk "for a holiday," and we thawed out and toasted on a stick, before a cheerful open fire, some of our frozen, sand-powdered bread. Altogether we made out so good a supper that Mr. Frost's imagination never once suggested to him the desirability of milk-toast, and we went to bed on the floor about nine o'clock—warm, comfortable, and happy.

Wednesday morning, after breakfast, we called upon Mr. Nésterof, the resident mining engineer, and Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein, the warden of the prison, for the purpose of getting permission to examine and investigate. Mr. Nésterof received us with generous Russian hospitality, insisted upon our taking a supplementary breakfast with him, and filled and refilled our glasses with *vódka*, cordial, Crimean wine, and Boston canned lemonade, until we feared that we should have to postpone our investigations indefinitely. Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein, who lived in a large, comfortable house full of blossoming oleanders, geraniums, and abutilon, then declared that we must drink another bottle of wine and eat a third breakfast with him, and it was after one o'clock when we finally set out for the prison and the mine.

Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein was a Finn by birth, and spoke Russian badly and with a strong German accent, but

he seemed to be honest and trustworthy, and talked to me with great frankness and good-humor.

"I am afraid," he said, as we drove through the village street, "that you will find our prison the worst you have

1. THE VALLEY AND MINING SETTLEMENT OF ALGACHÍ. 2. THE PRISON AT ALGACHÍ. 3. THE PRISON CORRIDOR.

ever seen. It is very old and in bad condition, but I can't do much to improve it. We are too far away from Peter" [St. Petersburg.]

I replied reassuringly that I did not think it could be worse than the common-criminal prison at Ust Karâ, and said that I had had experience enough to understand some

of the difficulties in the way of prison reform. He said nothing, but shook his head doubtfully, as if he thought that my experience would not be complete until I had examined the prison at Algachí. We presently stopped in front of a high log stockade, and, alighting from our vehicle, were received by a sentry with presented arms and then admitted by the officer of the day to a spacious courtyard, in the middle of which stood the prison. It was a long, low, quadrangular building of squared logs, with a plain board roof, a small porch and a door at one end, and a long row of heavily grated windows. It seemed to me at first sight to be falling down. The wall on the side next to us had sunk into the ground until it was apparently two feet or more out of plumb, and, so far as I could see, nothing prevented it from giving way altogether except a row of logs braced against it nearly at a right angle on the side towards which it leaned. All of the walls, at some remote time in the past, had been covered with plaster or stucco and then whitewashed; but this superficial coating had fallen off here and there in patches, giving to the building a most dilapidated appearance. It was, manifestly, a very old prison; but exactly how old, Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein could not tell me. For aught that he knew to the contrary it might have been standing since the opening of the mine in 1817. We entered the door at one end of the building and found ourselves in a long, dark, foul-smelling corridor, which was lighted only at the ends, and which divided the prison longitudinally into halves. Immediately to the left of the door as we entered was the pharmacy, and next to it a large square *kámera* used as a hospital or lazaret. In the latter were eight or ten low beds, upon which, under dirty, and in some cases bloody, sheets, were lying eight or ten sick or wounded convicts, whose faces were whiter, more emaciated, and more ghastly than any I had yet seen. Two or three of them, the warden said, had just been torn and shattered by a premature explosion of dynamite in the mine. The atmosphere of the lazaret, polluted by over-

respiration, heavy with the fevered breath of the sick, and pervaded by a faint odor of liniment and drugs, was so insufferable that I was glad, after a quick glance about the room, to escape into the corridor. The first regular *kámera* that we examined was about twenty-two feet square and seven or eight feet high, with two windows, a large brick oven, and a plank sleeping-platform extending around three of its sides. There was no provision for ventilation, and the air was almost, if not quite, as bad as in the worst cells of the prisons at Ust Karáa. I could breathe enough of it to sustain life, and that was all. The first thing that particularly attracted my attention, after I entered the *kámera*, was a broad band of dull red which extended around the dingy, whitewashed walls, just above the sleeping-platform, like a spotty dado of iron rust. Noticing that I was looking at it with curiosity, Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein remarked, with a half-humorous, half-cynical smile, that the prisoners had been "trying to paint their walls red."

"What is it, any way?" I inquired, and stepping to one end of the sleeping-platform I made a closer examination. The dull-red band at once resolved itself into a multitude of contiguous or overlapping blood-stains, with here and there the dried and flattened body of a bedbug sticking to the whitewash. I had no further difficulty in guessing the nature and significance of the discoloration. The tortured and sleepless prisoners had been "trying to paint their walls red" by crushing bedbugs with their hands, as high up as they could reach while lying on the *nári*, and in this way had so stained the dingy whitewash with their own blood that at a little distance there seemed to be a dado of iron rust around the three sides of the *kámera* where they slept. How many years this had been going on, how many thousand convicts had helped to "paint" those "walls red," I do not know; but I had suffered enough in Siberia myself from vermin fully to understand and appreciate the significance of that dull-red band.

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the other *kámeras*

of this wretched prison. They were all precisely like the first one except that they differed slightly in dimensions. All were overcrowded, all were swarming with vermin, and the air in them was polluted almost beyond endurance. At the time of our visit the prison as a whole contained 169 convicts—about twice the number for which there was adequate air space.

At the first favorable opportunity I said to Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein: "I cannot understand why you allow such a prison as this to exist. You have here 169 convicts. Only forty or fifty of them work in the mine; the rest lie all day in these foul cells in idleness. Why don't you take them out to the nearest forest, set them to work cutting timber, make them drag the logs to the village, and have them build a better and larger prison for themselves? They would be glad to do it, the expense would be trifling, and in a few months you would have here a prison fit for a human being to live in."

"My dear sir," he replied,[1] "I cannot send convicts into the woods without orders to do so. Suppose some of them should escape,—as they probably would,—I should be held responsible and should lose my place. I don't dare to do anything that I have not been ordered to do by the prison department. The authorities in St. Petersburg are aware of the condition of this prison. I have reported on it year after year. As long as five years ago, after calling attention as urgently as I dared to the state of affairs, I received orders to consult with the district architect and draw up a plan and estimates for a new prison. I did so; but you know how such things go. Letters are two or three months in reaching St. Petersburg from here. When our plans and estimates finally get there they go to the prison department, where they have to take their turn with hundreds of other documents from hundreds of other prisons in all parts of the Empire. Perhaps for months they are not even

[1] I do not pretend to quote Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein's exact words, but I give accurately, I think, the substance of his statements.

looked at. Finally they are examined, and some decision is reached with regard to them. If they require an extraordinary expenditure of money they may have to go to the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Finance, or await the making up of the budget for the next fiscal year. In any event twelve months or more elapse before their fate is finally determined. Somewhere and by somebody objection is almost sure to be made, either to the plans themselves, or to the amount of money that they require, and the documents are returned to us for modification or amendment in accordance with the suggestions of some official who knows little or nothing about our needs and circumstances. Thus, a year or more after the departure for St. Petersburg of our plans and estimates they come back to us for alteration. We alter them in such a way as to meet the views of our superiors and send them to St. Petersburg again. In the meantime the *personnel* of the prison department has perhaps changed. New officials have taken the places of the old; new ideas with regard to prisons and prison reform have become prevalent; and our modified plans and estimates, which would have satisfied the prison authorities of 1880, are found defective by the prison authorities of 1882. After the lapse of another period of sixteen or eighteen months the papers again come back to us for revision and alteration. And so it goes on, year after year. Plans and estimates for a new prison at the mine of Algachí have been in existence ever since 1880. Meanwhile they have twice been to St. Petersburg and back, and are now there for the third time. What are you going to do about it? Even when the erection of a new prison has been authorized, the work proceeds very slowly. It is now almost ten years since the Government actually began to build a new brick prison at the mine of Górni Zerentúi, and the carpenters have n't even got the roof on, to say nothing about floors."[1]

[1] This prison was not finished until the Chief Prison Administration for 1888—three years later. (Report of 1888, p. 99.)

"But," I said, "such a system is all wrong; there 's no sense in such management. What is the use of corresponding for years with indifferent officials in St. Petersburg about a matter that might be settled in twenty-four hours by the governor of the province, or even by a petty *isprávnik?* All over Eastern Siberia I have found miserable, decaying, tumble-down log prisons, and everywhere in such prisons I have seen able-bodied convicts living month after month in absolute idleness. The country is full of trees suitable for timber, you have plenty of labor that costs you nothing, every Russian peasant knows how to put up a log building—why don't you let your idle convicts build prisons for themselves?"

"We have n't a strong enough convoy here to guard convicts in the woods," said the warden; "they would escape."

"That is no reason," I replied. "It is easy enough for a Government like yours to strengthen the convoy during the time that the timber is being cut; and suppose that a few of the prisoners do escape! From my point of view it would be better to let half of them escape than to keep them shut up in idleness in such a prison as this. Nobody yet has given me a satisfactory explanation of the fact that, although hundreds, if not thousands, of convicts lie idle for months or years in overcrowded and decaying log prisons, no attempt is made to utilize their labor in the erection of larger and better buildings."[1]

The warden shrugged his shoulders in the significant Russian way, but did not pursue the subject. I have never seen any reason to change the opinion that I formed at Algachí with regard to this prison. As a place of confinement, even for the worst class of offenders, it was a disgrace

[1] Since this chapter was written, convict labor has been utilized, as here suggested, in the erection of a new exile forwarding prison at Alexándrofsk, a short distance from Irkútsk. The building was put up under the immediate personal supervision of State Councillor Petróf, of the Irkútsk provincial administration, in a much shorter time than was anticipated, and at a cost twenty-five per cent below the estimates. (Report of the Chief Prison Administration for 1888, p. 103.)

to a civilized state, and the negligence, indifference, and incompetence shown by the Government in dealing with its admitted evils were absolutely inexcusable.

CAMELS GRAZING IN THE SNOW NEAR THE ALGACHÍ MINE.

After having thanked Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein for his hospitality, and for his courtesy in showing us the prison, Mr. Frost and I set out, with Mr. Nésterof, for the Algachí mine, which is situated about a mile from the village, on the northern slope of one of the great mountain

waves that form the valley. The day was clear and pleasant, but very cold; the ground was everywhere covered with snow, and a most dreary arctic landscape was presented to us as we rode from the prison down into the valley. A few hundred yards from the village our attention was attracted to half a dozen dark objects—apparently animals of some kind—on the white slope of the adjacent hill.

"I verily believe," said Mr. Frost, after a prolonged stare at them, "that they 're camels!"

"Camels!" I exclaimed incredulously. "Who ever heard of camels at the mines of Nérchinsk? and how could they live in such a climate as this?"

As we drew nearer to them, however, it became evident that camels they were. To whom they belonged, whence they had come, and whither they were going I do not know; but it seemed strange enough to see a herd of great double-humped Bactrian camels nibbling the tufts of frost-bitten grass that appeared here and there above the snow in the foreground of that bleak, desolate arctic landscape.

If we had expected to find at the mine of Algachí the buildings, the steam-engines, the hoisting machinery, and the stamp-mills that would have marked the location of an American mine, we should have been greatly disappointed. The mining-plant consisted of a powder-magazine, a roofed-over cellar used for the storage of dynamite, a shanty or two, and a small log tool-house which served also as a smithy, a repair shop, a crushing and sorting room, and a guard-house. In the building last mentioned half a dozen convicts, including two or three women, were breaking up ore with short hammers and sorting it into piles, an overseer was sharpening a drill on an old worn grindstone, and three or four soldiers were lounging on a low bench, over which, in a rack against the wall, hung their Berdan rifles. It was, without exception, the most feeble exhibition of mining activity that I had ever witnessed.

Mr. Nésterof did not seem inclined to go down into the mine with us, but turned us over to one of the convicts,

who, he said, would show us all that there was to be seen. Meanwhile he himself would attend to some matters of business and await our reappearance. Our guide gave to each of us an unsheltered tallow candle, with a piece of paper wrapped around it, provided himself with a similar light, thrust half a dozen dynamite cartridges about as big as cannon firecrackers into the breast of his sheepskin coat in such a manner as to leave the long white fuses hanging out, and said that he was ready. We followed him out of the tool-house, ascended the mountain-side about a hundred yards, and entered through a narrow wooden door a low horizontal gallery, the sides of which were timbered, and upon whose inclined floor had been laid a rude wooden tramway. Stopping for a moment just inside the door to light our candles, we groped our way in a half-crouching attitude along the low gallery, our convict guide stumbling now and then over the loose planks in such a way as to suggest to my mind the idea that he would eventually fall down, bring the flame of his light into contact with the dangling fuses of his dynamite cartridges, and blow us all out of the tunnel like wads from a Fourth-of-July cannon. About 150 feet from the entrance we came to the black, unguarded mouth of the main shaft, out of which projected the end of a worn, icy ladder. Down this our guide climbed with practised ease, shouting back at us a warning to be careful where we stepped, since some of the rungs were missing and the ladders were set diagonally parallel with one another at such an angle as to necessitate a long stride across the shaft from the bottom of one to the top of the next. We were not half as much afraid, however, of losing our foothold as we were of being blown into fragments by an accidental explosion of his dynamite cartridges. I still had a vivid remembrance of the ghastly forms lying under the bloody sheets in the prison hospital, and every time I looked down and saw the guide's candle swaying back and forth in close proximity to the white fuses that hung out of the breast of his sheepskin coat I could not help imagining

the appearance that I should present when laid out for surgical treatment, or perhaps for burial, on one of those dirty prison cots.

As we slowly descended into the depths of the mine, sometimes on ladders and sometimes on slippery notched logs, I became conscious of a peculiar, unpleasant odor, which I presumed to be due to a recent explosion of dynamite in one of the adjacent galleries. Our candles began to burn blue and finally went out altogether, matches could hardly be made to light, and we found ourselves clinging to a worn ladder, in total darkness, over a bottomless abyss, wondering how long air that would not support combustion would support life. We did not feel any sensation of oppression, nor did we seem to be in any immediate danger of asphyxiation; but there was evidently very little of oxygen in the air, and we were not a little relieved when, by dint of striking innumerable matches, we succeeded in groping our way down two or three more ladders to the mouth of a gallery where our candles would again burn. Along this gallery we proceeded for a hundred yards or more, clambering here and there over piles of glittering ore which convicts were carrying on small hand-barrows to one of the hoisting shafts. The temperature of the mine seemed to be everywhere below the freezing point, and in many places the walls and roof were thickly incrusted with frost-crystals, which sparkled in the candlelight as if the gallery were lined with gems. After wandering about hither and thither in a maze of low, narrow passages, we came to another shaft, and descended another series of worn, icy ladders to the deepest part of the mine. Here six or eight men were at work getting out ore and drilling holes in the rock for the insertion of blasting cartridges. Their tools and appliances were of the rudest, most primitive description, and the way in which the work was being carried on would have brought a contemptuous smile to the face of a Nevada miner. The air almost everywhere on the lower level had been exhausted of its oxygen and vitiated by ex-

plosives to such an extent that our candles went out almost as fast as we could relight them; but no adequate provision had been made for renewing the air supply. The only ventilating apparatus in use was a circular iron fan, or blower, which a single convict turned by means of a clumsy wooden crank. It made a loud rumbling noise that could be heard all over the lower part of the mine, but, as there were no pipes to it or from it, it was absolutely useless. It merely agitated the impure air a little in the immediate vicinity, and so far as desirable results were concerned the convict who operated it might as well have turned a grindstone.

After wandering about the mine for half an hour, examining at various points the silver-bearing veins, collecting specimens of the ore, and watching the work of the sheepskin-coated convicts, we retraced our steps to the bottom of the main shaft, laboriously climbed up thirty or forty ladders and notched logs to the upper level, and returned to the tool-house.

A cold, piercing wind was blowing across the desolate mountain-side, and ten or fifteen shivering convicts who had finished their day's task, and were standing in a group near the tool-house asked permission of Mr. Nésterof to return to their prison, where they might at least keep warm. He told them rather roughly that the day's output of ore had not all been "sorted," and that they must wait. There was no place where they could go for shelter; they had had nothing to eat since morning; and for an hour and a half or more they were compelled to stand out-of-doors on the snow, exposed to a piercing wind, in a temperature below zero, while the "sorters" in the tool-house were finishing their work. It was, perhaps, a trivial thing, but it showed a hardness and indifference to suffering on the part of the mining officials that went far to confirm the statements made to us by the young technologist from St. Petersburg. Mr. Nésterof seemed to be irritated by the very reasonable request of the half-frozen convicts as if it were an evidence of impudence and insubordination.

After watching for a few moments the breaking up and sorting of the ore in the tool-house we drove to the Pokrófski mine, which was situated on the side of another bare mountain ridge about four miles farther to the northwestward. The country between the two mines was as dreary

THE POKRÓFSKI MINE.

and desolate as any we had yet traversed. Not a tree nor a bush was to be seen in any direction, and the rolling, snow-clad mountains suggested in general contour the immense surges and mounds of water raised by a hurricane at sea. The buildings at the entrance to the mine consisted of a tool-house like that at the mine of Algachí, a magazine or storehouse, a few A-shaped shanties, in which lived the convicts of the free command, and two small prisons, one of which was apparently new. On the summit of a rocky ridge just over these buildings were two sentry-boxes, in each of which stood an armed soldier on guard. Mr. Frost, who was very tired, did not care to inspect any more mines, and taking a position on the snow near the tool-house he proceeded, with hands encased in thick gloves, to make a sketch of the scene, while Mr. Nésterof and I, under the guidance of a convict, descended the main shaft. The Pokrófski mine did not differ essentially from that of Algachí, except that it was not so extensive nor so deep.

The air in it was damp and comparatively warm, water dripped from the roofs of the galleries into little pools here and there on the floors, and the ladders in the main shaft were slippery with mud. Why it should thaw in this mine and freeze in the mine of Algachí, only four miles away, I could not understand, nor did Mr. Nésterof seem to be able to give me a satisfactory explanation. In the mine of Algachí there was no water, and the galleries for seventy-five or a hundred feet together were lined with frost-crystals and ice. In the mine of Pokrófski there was no ice at all, and the shaft and galleries were dripping with moisture. The air in the Pokrófski mine seemed to be pure, and our candles everywhere burned freely. Only a few men were at work, and they seemed to be engaged in hauling up ore in small buckets by means of a cable and a primitive hand-windlass.

After climbing up and down slippery ladders until I was covered with mud, and walking in a bent posture through

THE POKRÓFSKI PRISON.

low galleries until my back ached, I told Mr. Nésterof that I was satisfied, and we returned, tired and bathed in perspiration, to the tool-house. The convict who had accompanied us through the mine blew out his tallow candle, and without taking the trouble completely to extinguish the wick laid it, still all aglow, in a small wooden box,

which contained among other things a dynamite cartridge big enough to blow the whole tool-house into the air. I did not regard myself as naturally timorous or nervous, but when the convict shut down the lid of that box over the long glowing wick of a tallow candle and a dynamite cartridge with fuse attached, I had business out-of-doors. When I thought time enough had elapsed for the wick to go out, I reëntered the house, washed my muddy hands in the grindstone trough, inspected Mr. Frost's sketches, and asked Mr. Nésterof a long series of questions about the mines.

The silver-bearing veins or lodes in the mines of Algachí and Pokrófski vary in thickness from 12 or 14 inches to 5 or 6 feet. The ore, which has a bright glittering appearance, consists of silver and lead in the proportion of about 1 to 100, with a greater or less admixture of what the Russian miners call *zínkovi obmánka*, or "zinc deceit." As the metal last named is much less fusible than lead, it becomes very troublesome in the reducing furnaces, and, so far as possible, the miners get rid of it by breaking up the ore into small pieces and discarding that part of it in which the zinc predominates. The work of crushing and sorting is performed by the weaker male convicts and the women, and is regarded as the lightest form of hard labor. It is about equivalent to breaking stones on the road with a heavy, short-handled hammer. Out of the mines of Algachí and Pokrófski, which are the most productive in the district, there are taken every year nearly 400 short tons of ore, which, when reduced, yields about 1440 pounds of silver, valued at $20,000, and 144,000 pounds of lead. The lead, owing to the expense of transportation to a market, is virtually worthless, and at the time of our visit nearly 2000 tons of it were lying at the Kutomárski Zavód, where the ore from these mines for many years has been reduced. The average number of convicts employed in the two mines is 220, and each of them gets out 3600 pounds of ore a year, or about 10 pounds a day. These figures alone are

enough to show how feebly and inefficiently the mines are worked. Until the early part of 1885 the convicts were sent down the shafts every day in the year with the exception of a few great church holy days, but since that time they have been allowed two days' rest a month, viz., the 1st and the 15th. They work by stents or "tasks," which can be completed by able-bodied men in from eight to ten hours. They receive, in quantity and kind, substantially the same food and clothing that are given to the hard-labor convicts at the mines of Karâ, and their maintenance costs the Government about $40 a year, or a little less than 11 cents a day per capita.

Regarded as places of punishment the Nérchinsk mines did not seem to me so terrible as they are often represented to be. It is not very pleasant, of course, to work eight or ten hours every day in a damp or icy gallery 300 feet underground; but even such employment is, I think, less prejudicial to health than unbroken confinement in a dirty, overcrowded, and foul-smelling convict prison. The mines are badly ventilated and the gases liberated in them by the explosives used are doubtless injurious; but there are no deadly fumes or exhalations from poisonous ores like cinnabar to affect the health of the laborers, and experience seems to show that the death-rate is no higher among the convicts who go regularly every day into the mines than among those who lie idle day after day in the vitiated air of the prison *kámeras*. If I were permitted to make choice between complete idleness in such a prison as that of Algachí or Ust Karâ and regular daily labor in the mines, I should, without hesitation, choose the latter. So far as I could ascertain by careful inquiry among the convicts themselves, no one has ever been compelled to live and sleep in these mines day and night, and I believe that all the stories to that effect published from time to time are wholly imaginary and fictitious. The working force may occasionally have been divided into day and night gangs, or shifts, sent into the mines alternately, but the same men have never

THE VILLAGE WELL AT ALGACHÍ.

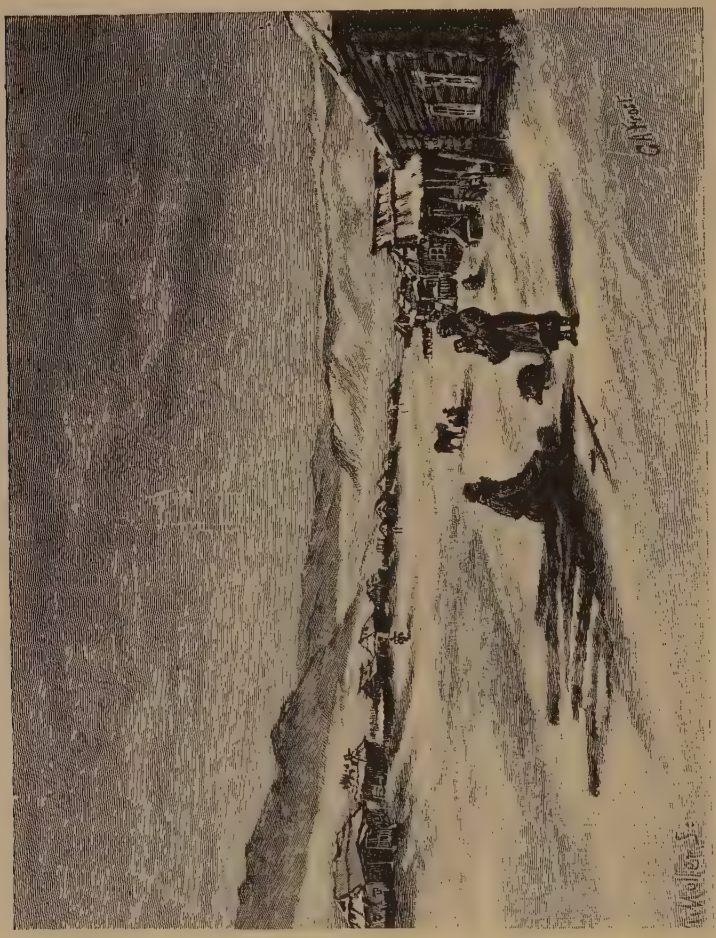
been required to remain there continuously for twenty-four hours. At the present time there is no night work and all of the convicts return to their prisons before dark, or, in the

short days of mid-winter, very soon after dark. I do not wish to be understood as saying that the life of Russian convicts at the Nérchinsk silver mines is an easy one, or that they do not suffer. I can hardly imagine a more terrible and hopeless existence than that of a man who works all day in one of the damp, muddy galleries of the Pokrófski mine, and goes back at night to a close, foul, vermin-infested prison like that of Algachí. It is worse than the life of any pariah dog, but at the same time it is not the sensationally terrible life of the fictitious convict described by Mr. Grenville Murray—the convict who lives night and day underground, sleeps in a rocky niche, toils in hopeless misery under the lash of a pitiless overseer, and is slowly poisoned to death by the fumes of quicksilver. Such things may be effective in a sensational drama, but they are not true. The worst feature of penal servitude in Siberia is not hard labor in the mines; it is the condition of the prisons.

When Mr. Frost, Mr. Nésterof, and I returned from the Pokrófski mine to the village of Algachí it was beginning to grow dark, and the village girls were watering their cows and filling their icy buckets at a curbed spring or well near the *zémski kvartír*. We drove to the house of Mr. Nésterof for dinner, spent an hour or two in conversation, and devoted the remainder of the evening to writing up note-books and completing sketches.

Friday morning, November 20th, we bade Mr. Nésterof and Lieutenant-colonel Saltstein good-by, and set out with two horses, a small uncomfortable *teléga*, and a fresh supply of provisions for the village and mine of Kadáiya, distant from Algachí about ninety miles. The weather was still very cold, the road ran through the same dreary, desolate sea of snow-covered mountains that surrounds the mine of Algachí, and for two days we neither saw nor heard anything of particular interest. At half-past eleven o'clock Friday night, tired, hungry, and half frozen, we reached the village of Donó, forty-six miles from Algachí; Satur-

day afternoon we passed the Kutomárski Zavód, where we stopped for two or three hours to examine the smelting works; and early Sunday morning, after having traveled nearly all night at the expense of not a little suffering from



THE VILLAGE OF KADÁIYA.

cold and hunger, we finally reached the miserable, forlorn mining village of Kadáiya, found the *zémski kvartír*, and as soon as we could warm and refresh ourselves a little with tea went promptly to bed—Mr. Frost on top of the large brick oven, and I on the floor.

About ten o'clock Sunday forenoon we got up, somewhat rested and refreshed, and after a hasty and rather unsatisfactory breakfast of bread and tea went out into the broad, snowy, and deserted street of the village—Mr. Frost to make a sketch, and I to find the *ustávshchik*, or officer in charge of the mine.

The Kadaínski mine, which is one of the oldest and most extensive silver mines in the Nérchinsk district, is situated on the side of a bold, steep, round-topped mountain about 300 yards from the village and 200 or 300 feet above it. It has been worked for more than a century, and was at one time very productive; but the richest veins of ore in it have been exhausted, and it does not now yield nearly as much silver as the Pokrófski mine or the mine of Algachí.

The *ustávshchik*, whom I found at work in a log house near the mine, and who seemed to be an intelligent and well-educated Siberian peasant, received me pleasantly but with some surprise, read my letters of introduction, expressed his willingness to show me everything that I desired to see, and in ten minutes we were on our way to the mine. In the tool-house, which stood over the mouth of the main shaft, I put on the outer dress of one of the convicts,—which I soon found to be full of vermin,—the *ustávshchik* donned a long, mud-stained *khalát*, a battered uniform cap, and a pair of heavy leather mittens, and providing ourselves with tallow candles we lowered ourselves into the black mouth of the Voskresénski or Ascension shaft. After descending ten or twelve ladders, we reached, at a depth of about 120 feet, a spacious chamber from which radiated three or four horizontal galleries much wider and higher than any that I had seen in the mines of Pokrófski and Algachí. The floor of the chamber was covered with water to a depth of three or four inches and moisture was dripping everywhere from the walls. At a depth of 200 feet we reached another landing and entered the mouth of a very wide and high gallery leading away into the heart of the mountain. There had just been a blast somewhere in this

part of the mine, and as we proceeded through the gallery, which was filled with powder smoke, I could see absolutely nothing except the faint glimmer of the *ustávshchik's* candle in the mist ahead. Guided by that, I stumbled along the

THE MOUNTAINS PIERCED BY KADAÍNSKI MINE.

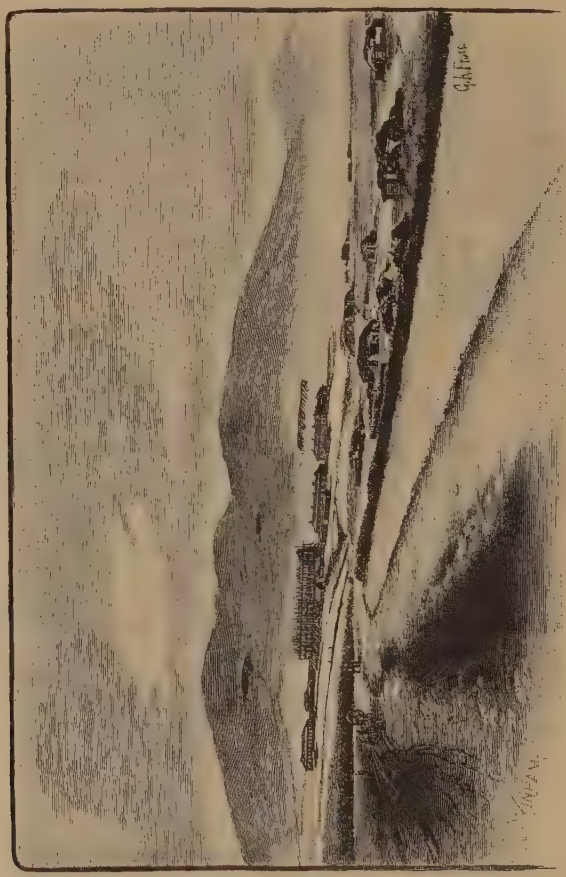
uneven floor of the gallery, stepping now and then into a hole or splashing into a pool of water, and imagining for an instant that I had tumbled into an abandoned shaft. In one place we passed a very extensive excavation, out of which the *ustávshchik* said an immense body of ore had been taken as long ago as the middle of the last century.

A vast area of roof had been left supported by quadrangular piles of crossed logs, which were so black from lapse of time that they were hardly recognizable as wood, and in many cases so soft that I could take pinches of rotten fiber out of them with my fingers. This part of the mine the *ustávshchik* said was regarded as very dangerous, and he did not think it prudent to go any farther. From the point where we turned to retrace our steps black, irregular caverns could still be seen stretching away in every direction—some upward, some horizontally, and some downward at a steep angle into an abyss of darkness. It was evident that the ore had been followed wherever it went and scooped out in the cheapest and most expeditious manner possible, without regard to safety, and with little attention to timbering. It was the most dangerous-looking place I had ever seen.

From these great caverns, of the time of Catherine II., we proceeded to the deepest part of the mine by descending a shaft cut through the solid rock at an angle of about forty-five degrees and not provided with ladders. A heavy and rusty chain had been festooned against one side by means of staples driven into holes drilled in the rock, and clinging to this chain we cautiously descended the shaft, with a stream of water running ankle-deep around our legs and tumbling in cascades into the depths of the mine. On the lowest level that we reached, a party of convicts was at work blasting out a new gallery with dynamite. A perpendicular climb of 300 or 400 feet up slippery ladders in another shaft brought us once more to the surface, and when, wet, muddy, and breathless, I stepped from the end of the last ladder upon the floor of the tool-house I was so exhausted that I could hardly stand on my feet.

After having visited and inspected the gloomy mine and the wretched, dilapidated log prison of Kadáiya, Mr. Frost and I proceeded across an apparently interminable series of bare, snowy mountain ridges to the mining settlement of Górni Zerentúi, which is situated in a wide, treeless valley

about forty miles north of the Kadaínski mine, and thirty miles from the boundary line between Eastern Siberia and Mongolia. We reached our destination at a late hour in the night, awakened the inmates of the *zémski kvartír*, or



GÓRNI ZERENTÚI,

official lodging-house, warmed and refreshed ourselves with tea, and lay down to sleep, as usual, on the hard, vermin-infested plank floor of the travelers' room. Monday morning we called upon Captain Demídof, the commanding officer of the post, and, at our request, were conducted at once to the prison. It consisted of two old, weather-beaten log buildings of the common East-Siberian type, and pre-

sented nothing that was either new or interesting. One hundred and eighty convicts were confined in the two buildings, and about as many more, who had finished their terms of probation, were living outside in the free command. A new three-story brick prison was in process of erection a short distance away, but work upon it had apparently been suspended or abandoned. It was already ten years old, and in view of the corrupt, shiftless, and inefficient management of prison affairs throughout Eastern Siberia, it seemed to me altogether likely that work upon it would drag along for five or six years more. At the time of our visit the structure had neither floors nor roof, and was still surrounded with scaffolding. Meanwhile 180 idle convicts were being slowly poisoned to death by bad air in the overcrowded *kámeras* of the log prison that the brick building was intended to replace.[1]

It is hard for an American to understand or make allowances for the shiftlessness, indifference, and inefficiency that are everywhere manifested throughout the Nérchinsk silver-mining district. The mines themselves are not half worked; hundreds of hard-labor convicts lie idle, month

[1] Upon my return to St. Petersburg in the spring of the following year, I had an interview with Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, the chief of the Russian prison administration, in the course of which I ventured to call his attention to the condition of the prisons in the Nérchinsk silver-mining district, and to the unfinished prison at Górni Zerentúi in particular. He admitted that the necessity for new places of confinement at the Nérchinsk mines was evident as early as 1872, and said that in 1874 a special construction committee was appointed to investigate, report, and submit plans. When he [Gálkine Wrásskoy] made a tour of inspection through Siberia in 1881—seven years later—he found that this specially appointed committee had spent 74,318 *rúbles* in the erection of two or three small log buildings and in temporary repairs to a few others, had pocketed 61,090 *rúbles* for salaries and expenses, and had not furnished to the prison administration a single plan or estimate. (These facts were set forth in the annual report of the prison administration for 1882, pp. 72, 73.)

"Well," I said, "what was done in view of this state of affairs?"

"I recommended," he replied, "that the construction committee be abolished."

"And was it abolished?"

"It was."

"I did not see anything at the Nérchinsk mines," I said, "to show for the 74,000 *rúbles* that the committee is supposed to have expended, except one small log prison that appeared to be new at the mine of Pokrófski and the unfinished brick building at Górni Zerentúi. Why has the latter been so

after month, in dirty, overcrowded cells; plans and estimates for new buildings go back and forth, year after year, between the mines and St. Petersburg; and when, at last, a prison like that at Górni Zerentúi is authorized, work upon it drags along, in a lazy, shiftless fashion, for a whole decade, without the least apparent reason. I said one day to the resident mining-engineer at the Kutomárski Zavód, "Why don't you provide yourself with suitable iron machinery, furnish your laborers with improved modern tools, set up steam-pumping, hoisting, and ventilating apparatus, and work your mines as they ought to be worked? What is the use of pottering along in the way you do?"

"My dear sir," he replied, "do you know what iron costs here? We have to bring it with horses from Petrófski Zavód, a distance of more than 600 *versts*, and it costs, delivered here, 5½ *rúbles* a *pud* [about 7⅔ cents a pound]. We can't afford to put in iron machinery."

"But," I said, "is n't there iron ore in this vicinity?"

"Yes," he replied; "but it has never been gotten out."

long—ten years—in process of erection?"

"The delay has been due in part," he replied, "to repeated changes of plan. The building ought not to have been made of brick, in the first place. Careful estimates show that a brick prison for 300 convicts will cost at the mines about 160,000 *rúbles*, while a good log prison, to accommodate the same number of men, can be built for 52,000 *rúbles*. A brick prison has no advantage over a wooden one in point of permanency, because when the mine near which it stands has been worked out, the building must, of necessity, be abandoned; and it is less wasteful, of course, to abandon a log prison than one made of brick. The prison at Górni Zerentúi, however, was so far advanced when I assumed the direction of the prison department that it hardly seemed worth while to suspend work upon it and begin another."

Neither Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy nor his assistant, Mr. Kokóftsef, gave me any satisfactory explanation of the delays, mistakes, and bad management generally that seemed to me to characterize the administration of prison affairs in the mining district of the Trans-Baikál. They were doing, they said, all that they could do to improve the situation; but they had inherited most of the existing evils from their official predecessors, and time enough had not elapsed for complete and sweeping reforms. It is possible that I did not fully appreciate the difficulties and embarrassments with which they had to contend; but it seemed to me that many, if not most, of the evils of the exile system in general, and of the prison administration in particular, were the result of indifference, inefficiency, and a complicated bureaucratic method of transacting public business.

"Why don't you get it out, set up smelting-furnaces, and make your iron here on the ground where you need it? More than half of your convicts lie constantly idle in their cells—why don't you utilize their labor?"

THE SÁVENSKI MINE.

"We can't open an iron mine," he replied, "without a *razreshénia* [a permit or an authorization] from St. Petersburg."

"Then why don't the proper authorities give you a *razreshénia?* What is the reason that a useful and necessary work of this kind cannot be accomplished? I don't see how the present state of affairs can be profitable to anybody."

His only reply was a shrug of the shoulders, which I interpreted to mean either that he did not know or that it was not his business.

From the prisons of Górni Zerentúi we drove in Captain Demídof's *dróshky* to the Sávenski mine, which we found on a snowy, desolate mountain slope about two miles from the village. The buildings at the mouth of the shaft were

cheap and insignificant, as usual, but one of them contained a small steam-engine—the first and only machine of the kind that I saw in the Trans-Baikál. While Mr. Frost was making a sketch of the building and of the dreary arctic landscape, I went through the mine, but found little to reward me for the labor of climbing up and down the icy ladders. The shaft was less than a hundred feet in depth; the galleries were so low that I could not anywhere stand upright; the atmosphere was damp and chilly; and the roofs and walls were thickly incrusted with frost or ice. Only thirty-five convicts were at work in the mine, and most of them seemed to be engaged in carrying ore in small wicker baskets to the hoisting shaft, emptying it into square wooden buckets holding about a bushel each, and then raising it to the surface, a bucketful at a time, by means of a clumsy old wooden windlass. I doubted whether methods more primitive were employed even by the aborigines who worked these silver veins three centuries earlier. Certainly none more primitive had ever come under my observation. I said to the *ustávshchik*, or overseer, who conducted me through the mine, "Why don't you set more men at work here? I have just come from the prison, where I found at least 150 convicts idle."

"We have n't room for more than thirty-five or forty men in the galleries," he replied soberly.

"But you can extend the mine, can you not?" I inquired. "Fifty or a hundred more laborers could soon make room for themselves by digging and blasting. If the ore is there, why not extend your operations and get it out as rapidly as possible? You ought to widen and heighten your galleries, lay down tramways in them, improve your hoisting apparatus, employ horse power, and work on a larger scale."

The *ustávshchik* made no reply, but looked at me in a surprised way, as if he regarded my ideas as utterly wild and impracticable.

The number of hard-labor convicts in the Nérchinsk silver-mining district at the time of our visit was approxi-

mately 952, distributed as follows: at the Alexandrófski Zavód, 188; at the mine of Algachí, 150; at the Pokrófski mine, 70; at the Kadaínski and Smírnovo mines, 184; and at the Sávenski and Górni Zerentúiefski mines, 360. Probably not more than one-third of these men, and certainly not more than half of them, were actually engaged in hard labor. The rest lived, month after month, in enforced idleness, notwithstanding the amount of work that there was everywhere to be done. The only reasons I could get for this state of affairs were, first, that room could not be found for the idle men in the mines; secondly, that the convoys of soldiers were not strong enough to guard large parties of convicts on the roads or in the forests; thirdly, that it would cost more to erect new prisons with convict labor and under official supervision than to have them built by contract;[1] and fourthly, that the convicts could not be set to work in any of the ways that I suggested without a *razreshénia*, or authorization, from St. Petersburg. None of these reasons had, to my mind, the least force or validity. The idleness of the convicts, and the failure of the authorities to do any one of the scores of things that needed doing, were the direct result, it seemed to me, of official indifference, incapacity, or lack of enterprise. An energetic American with plenary powers and a capital of $10,000 or $15,000 would take the 950 convicts imprisoned in the Nérchinsk silver-mining district, and in less than two years would have a new prison built at every mine in

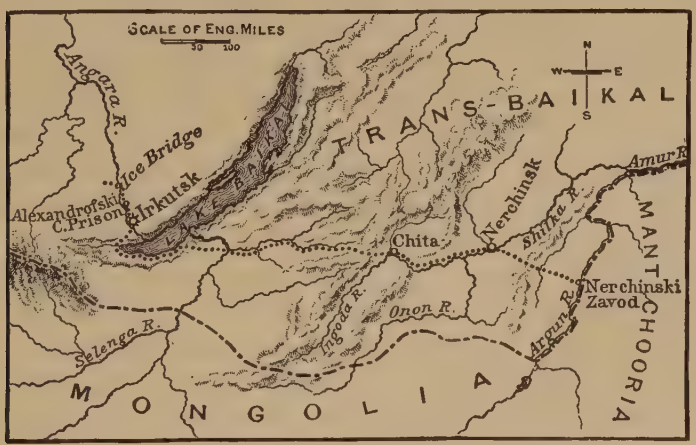
[1] This reason was based on the admitted incompetence and dishonesty of the local officials under whose supervision the work would have to be done. There are cases on record in which the local Siberian authorities embezzled the whole of the sum appropriated for the erection of a Government building and reported such building as completed and occupied when even its foundations had not been laid. Such a case—that of the Ukírski *étape*—is cited in the Vérkhni Údinsk correspondence of the St. Petersburg *Eastern Review*, No. 2, January 12, 1884, p. 8. A well-known photographer in Siberia showed me a photograph of a new Government building which he had just taken, he said, upon an order from St. Petersburg, and which he was about to send to the higher authorities in that city as a proof that the structure, which had been ordered and paid for, was really in existence and had been built in accordance with the plans.

the whole region, and in less than five years would double, if not quadruple, the productive capacity of the mines themselves, without calling upon the imperial treasury for a single dollar in the shape of extraordinary expenditure. Such, at least, was the opinion that I formed on the ground, after as careful an examination as I could make of the working methods of the local officials.

CHAPTER X

ADVENTURES IN EASTERN SIBERIA

THE Savenski mine was the last one that we visited in Eastern Siberia. Monday afternoon, November 23d, we drove to the Nérchinski Zavód, or Nérchinsk Works, a large village about ten miles from Górni Zerentúi, and Tuesday morning we set out on our return journey to the Shílka River and the town of Nérchinsk, distant about two hundred



OUR ROUTE FROM NÉRCHINSKI ZAVÓD TO THE ANGARÁ.

miles. It is not necessary to describe in detail our long, tedious, and exhausting ride. The country through which we passed was a dreary desert of low, rolling mountains, thinly covered with snow; the thermometer ranged constantly from zero to twenty-seven degrees below; the roads

were generally rough, hard-frozen, and bare; the *telégas* and *tárantáses* furnished us were the worst and most uncomfortable vehicles of their kind in all Eastern Siberia; and we suffered from cold, hunger, jolting, and sleeplessness until we were reduced to a state of silent, moody, half-savage exasperation, in which life—or at least *such* a life—seemed no longer worth living, and we were ready to barter all our earthly rights and possessions for a hot bath, a good dinner, and twelve hours of unbroken sleep in a warm, clean bed.

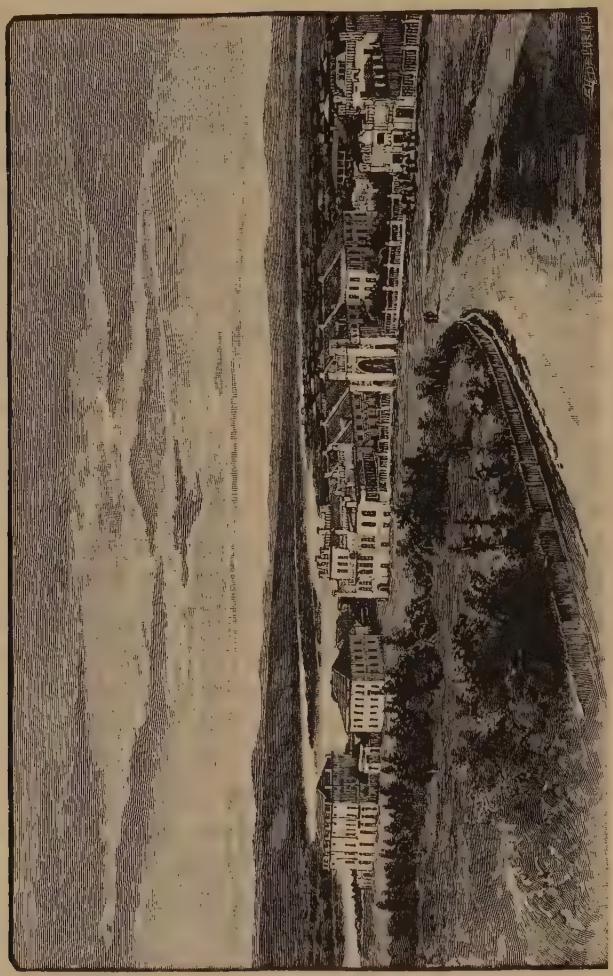
At four o'clock Thursday morning, a little more than forty hours after leaving the Nérchinski Zavód, we reached the post-station of Biankínskaya, on the bank of the Shílka River, and, transferring our baggage for the first time from a wheeled vehicle to a sledge, we continued our journey to Nérchinsk over the ice in a temperature of twenty degrees below zero. We had had for several days very little to eat, and in the absence of nourishing food the intense cold forced me to put on, one over another, no less than three heavy sheepskin *shúbas*, which extended from my neck to my heels and transformed me into a huge perambulating cotton bale surmounted by a fur cap and a dirty, unshaven, frost-bitten face. Even under all my furs I was cold to the very marrow of my bones; and Mr. Frost, who had only two warm coats and wore only one, suffered much more than I did. When we reached Nérchinsk, late that forenoon, we found that there was no snow in the streets, and as our underfed and feeble horses could not drag us over bare ground, we alighted from our sledge and waddled ingloriously behind it into the city, like stiff-jointed arctic mummies marching after the hearse in a funeral procession.

At Nérchinsk, for the first time in a month, we stopped in a hotel; but in point of cleanliness and comfort it was far inferior to the *zémski kvartírs* in which we had slept at the mines. It was, in fact, the very worst hotel that we had seen in Siberia. The main hall, which divided the one-

story log building into halves, was dark and dirty, and had been fitted up with shelves in order that it might serve also as a butler's pantry; the room to which we were shown was chilly and bare, and its stale, heavy atmosphere was pervaded by a faint odor of *ugár*, or charcoal gas; half of the paper had fallen or been torn from the walls and was hanging here and there in ragged strips; yellow, dirt-incrusted paint was peeling in flakes from window-sashes and casings that apparently had never been dusted or washed; the rough, uncovered plank floor was not only dirty, but had sunk unevenly in places and was full of rat-holes; cockroaches were running briskly over the tea-stained, crumb-besprinkled cotton cloth that covered the only table in the room; there was no bed upon which the tired wayfarer might repose, nor mirror in which he might have the melancholy satisfaction of surveying his frost-bitten countenance. The only servant in the establishment was a half-grown boy in top-boots and a red flannel shirt; and the greenish-yellow brass pan that he brought us to wash our hands and faces over had evidently been used habitually for another and a much more ignoble purpose, and had never been rinsed or cleaned. Tired, cold, and hungry, and accustomed as we were to dirt, disorder, and discomfort, we regarded this cheerless, neglected hotel with dismay; but it was the only one that the place afforded, and we were compelled to make the best of it. The proprietor was an exiled Pole named Klementóvich, and I could not help thinking that if he kept in Poland such a hotel as he maintained in Nérchinsk, there were reasons enough, based upon sound public policy and a due regard for the general welfare, to justify his banishment by administrative process to the most remote part of Siberia, regardless of his political opinions. After a breakfast of tea, sour rye-bread, and greasy pancakes, we set our dress to rights as well as we could before a diminutive mirror that the proprietor finally brought us, and walked out

to take a look at the town and deliver one or two letters of introduction.

The town of Nérchinsk, which has about 4000 inhabitants, is situated on the left bank of the Nércha River, two or



BÚTIN'S HOUSE AT NÉRCHINSK.

three miles above the junction of the latter with the Shílka, and about 4600 miles east of St. Petersburg. In point of culture and material prosperity it seemed to me to compare favorably with most East-Siberian towns of its class. It

has a bank, two or three schools, a hospital with twenty beds, a library, a museum, a public garden with a fountain, and fifty or sixty shops, and its trade in furs and manufactured goods from European Russia amounts to about $1,000,000 per annum. The most striking feature of the town to a new-comer is the almost palatial residence of the wealthy mining proprietor Bútin, which would compare favorably not only with any house in Siberia, but with most houses in the capital of the Empire. The Bútin brothers were in financial difficulties at the time of our visit to Nérchinsk, and all of their property was in the hands of a receiver; but we had a note of introduction to the latter from the younger member of the firm, and upon presentation of it we were allowed to inspect the deserted but still beautiful mansion. Going into it from Klementóvich's hotel was like going into Aladdin's palace from an East-Siberian *étape;* and as I entered the splendid ball-room, and caught the full-length reflection of my figure in the largest mirror in the world,[1] I felt like rubbing my eyes to make sure that I was awake, One does not expect to find in the wilds of Eastern Siberia. nearly 5000 miles from St. Petersburg, a superb private residence with hardwood marquetry floors, silken curtains, hangings of delicate tapestry, stained-glass windows, splendid chandeliers, soft Oriental rugs, white-and-gold furniture upholstered with satin, old Flemish paintings, marble statues, family portraits from the skilful brush of Makófski, and an extensive conservatory filled with palms, lemon-trees, and rare orchids from the tropics. Such luxury would excite no remark in a wealthy and populous European city; but in the snowy wilderness of the Trans-Baikál, 3000 miles from the boundary-line of Europe, it comes to the unprepared

[1] This huge pier-glass was bought by Mr. Bútin at the Paris Exposition in 1878, and was then said to be the largest mirror in existence. It was taken half around the world by sea to the East-Siberian port of Nikoláievsk, and was thence transported up the rivers Amúr and Shílka to Nérchinsk in a barge made expressly for the purpose. It is now in the ball-room of Mr. Bútin's house, and does not look at all out of place or out of harmony with its surroundings.

traveler with the shock of a complete surprise. The house had not been occupied for several months, and of course did not appear at its best; but it seemed to me that I had rarely seen more evidences of wealth, refinement, and cultivated taste than were to be found within its walls. The ball-room, which was the largest room in the house, was about sixty-five feet in length by forty-five in width, and over it, in a large semicircular gallery reached by a grand stairway, there was an orchestrion, as big as a church organ, which played sixty or seventy airs and furnished music for the entertainments that the Bútins, in the days of their prosperity, were accustomed to give to the people of the town. The library, which was another spacious apartment, was filled with well-selected books, newspapers, and magazines, in three or four languages, and contained also a large collection of Siberian minerals and ores. Adjoining the house were the offices and shops where the Bútins carried on the various branches of their extensive and diversified business, and where they had accumulated the wealth that the house partly represented or embodied. In addition to gold-mining, they were engaged in trading, distilling, iron-manufacturing, and the construction of steamers, and their business operations extended to all parts of Eastern Siberia, and gave employment to many hundreds of men.

After thanking the receiver, Mr. Pomázkin, for his courtesy in going through the house with us, we returned to the hotel, and later in the afternoon called upon Messrs. Charúshin and Kuznetsóf, two political exiles who had served out terms of hard labor at the mines, and had then been sent as forced colonists to Nérchinsk, where they were living with their families in comparative comfort. We found them both to be intelligent, cultivated, and very companionable men, and during our three-days' stay in the town we passed with them many pleasant hours. They had had a very hard experience at the mines of Kará, but after their arrival at Nérchinsk they had been treated with reasonable

courtesy and consideration, and had even been permitted to engage in branches of business, such as teaching and photography, that by law are closed to political offenders. All of their correspondence was still "under control" —that is, subject to official supervision and censorship — but they were not constantly watched, regulated, and harassed by the police, as political exiles are in so many other parts of Siberia, and it seemed to me that their life, although hard and lonely, was perfectly tolerable. Mr. Charúshin, before his banishment, spent four years and a half in solitary confinement, and for two years and a half lay in one of the bomb-proof casemates of the Petropávlovski fortress. His offense was carrying on a revolutionary propaganda among the factory operatives in one of the suburbs of St. Petersburg. When he was finally sent to Siberia, in 1878, his wife voluntarily accompanied him, and at the mines of Kará she lived alone in a wretched little cabin at the Lower Diggings until, upon the expiration of his term of probation, Mr. Charúshin was permitted to join her. He was one of the nine political convicts of the free command sent back to prison by order of Loris-Mélikof on the 1st of January, 1881, and it was in his house that poor Eugene Semyónofski committed suicide on the eve of that day.

Sunday morning, November 29th, after bidding good-by with sincere regret to Mr. and Mrs. Charúshin, whose warm hearts and lovable characters had won our affection and esteem, we left Nérchinsk in a sleigh for Chíta, the capital of the Trans-Baikál.

The icicles that hung from the nostrils of our frost-whitened horses, the sharp metallic creaking of the crisp snow under our sledge-runners, the bluish, opalescent tints of the distant mountains, and the high, slender columns of smoke that stood, without waver or tremble, over the chimneys of the houses were all evidences of a very low, if not an arctic, temperature; and I was not surprised, when I looked at our thermometer, to find the mercury stationary

at twenty-seven degrees below zero. As night came on, the intensity of the cold increased until it was all that we could do to endure it from one post-station to another. We drank three or four tumblers of hot tea every time we stopped to change horses; but in the long, lonely hours between midnight and morning, when we could get no warm food and when all our vital powers were usually at their lowest ebb, we suffered very severely. We had no difficulty in getting post-horses until just before dark Monday evening, when we reached the station of Turinopovorótnaya, about fifty miles from Chíta, and found the whole village in a state of hilarious intoxication. Sleighs filled with young men and boys were careering hither and thither with wild whoops and halloos; long lines of peasant girls in bright-colored calico dresses were unsteadily promenading back and forth in the streets with their arms around one another and singing *khórovód* songs; the station-house was filled with flushed and excited people from neighboring settlements, who had evidently been participating in a celebration of some kind and were about starting for their homes; the station-master, who perhaps had not finished his celebration, was nowhere to be found; there was not a driver about the stables; and the *stárosta*,[1] a short, fat old man, who looked like a burgher from Amsterdam, was so drunk that even with the aid of a cane he could hardly stand on his feet. In vain we tried to ascertain the reasons for this surprising epidemic of inebriation. Nobody was sober enough to explain to us what had happened. From the excited and more or less incoherent conversation of the intoxicated travelers in the station-house, I learned that even the village priest was so drunk that he had to be taken home in a sleigh by the soberest of his parishioners. If the station-master, the *stárosta*, the village priest, the drivers, and all of the inhabitants were drunk, there was evidently no prospect of our being able to get horses. In fact we

[1] A *stárosta*, or elder, is the head of a Siberian village.

could not find anybody who seemed sober enough to know the difference between a horse and his harness. We therefore brought our baggage into the crowded station-house, and sat down in an unoccupied corner to study intoxicated humanity and await further developments. Every person in the house was drunk, except ourselves and one small baby in arms. The father of this baby, a good-looking young Russian officer in full uniform, wandered unsteadily about the room, animated apparently by a hazy idea that he ought to be collecting his scattered baggage so as to be in readiness for a start; but the things that he picked up in one place he dropped feebly in another, and every minute or two he would suspend operations to exchange with his intoxicated companions fragmentary reminiscences of the day's festivity. Finally he seemed to be struck by a happy thought, and, making his way in a devious course to one corner of the room, he took up his saber, which was leaning against the wall, and, carrying it to his intoxicated wife, committed it solemnly to her care with directions to take it out to the sleigh. She was sober enough to remark, with some asperity, that as she had a young baby in her arms, and as the temperature out-of-doors was twenty degrees below zero, he had better take the saber to the sleigh himself. At this he clasped the sheathed weapon dramatically to his breast, rolled his eyes in a fine frenzy upward, and declared with emotion that the saber was his first bride, that he never would forsake it, and that, in view of all the circumstances, he *would* take it out to the sleigh himself. A moment later, however, he dropped it, and but for the supervision of his second bride would have forgotten it altogether.

About eight o'clock, after watching for an hour or two such performances as these, I succeeded in capturing the *stárosta*, and addressing to him some very energetic remarks I sobered him sufficiently to make him understand that we must have horses at once or there would be trouble.

While I stood over him with a verbal club, he entered us in the station-house book as "Mr. Kennan and companion, citizens of Neighboring States";[1] and then going out on the front steps he shouted, as every sleigh-load of drunken men went past, "Andréi! Nikolái! Loshedéi sei chas!" [Horses, this moment!] The only replies that he received were wild howls of derision. At every such outburst of hilarious contempt for authority, he would raise his shaking hands as high as his head with a feeble and comical gesture of helplessness and despair, and exclaim in maudlin tones: "Fsei pyánni! Shto prikázhtie dyélat? Chisto nakazánia!" [They 're all drunk! What are you going to do about it? It 's a regular punishment!]

About nine o'clock the noise, tumult, and shouting in the village streets began to subside; the station-master, whose intoxication had taken the form of severe official dignity, suddenly appeared, and in a tone of stern menace wanted to know where the post-drivers were and what all this disorder meant; the young Russian officer, who by this time had reached the affectionate stage of inebriation, kissed all the women in the room, crossed himself devoutly, and meandered out to the sleigh, followed by his wife with the baby and the saber; two intoxicated priests in long gowns, and high, cylindrical, brimless hats draped with black crape, alighted from a *dróshky* in front of the door, allowed their hands to be reverently kissed by the inebriated young officer and his friends, and then rode off in a post-sleigh driven by a peasant who could hardly keep his seat on the box; and finally, when we had almost abandoned the hope of ever getting away, a really sober man in a ragged sheepskin coat emerged from the darkness and reported in a business-like manner to the station-master that the horses were ready for us. The drunken and irate official, who seemed desirous of vindicating his dignity and authority in some way, over-

[1] The Russian words for "neighboring" and "united" bear a superficial resemblance to each other, and the poor intoxicated *stárosta* had never heard, evidently, of such a country as the United States.

whelmed the unfortunate driver with abuse, and ended by fining him fifty *kopéks*—whether for being sober or for having the horses ready, I do not know. We piled our baggage into the sleigh, climbed in upon it, and rode out of the intoxicated settlement with thankful hearts. As the last faint sounds of revelry died away in the distance behind us, I said to the driver: "What 's the matter with everybody in this village? The whole population seems to be drunk."

"They 've been consecrating a new church," said the driver, soberly.

"Consecrating a church!" I exclaimed in amazement. "Is that the way you consecrate churches?"

"I don't know," he replied. "Sometimes they drink. After the services they had a *guláinia* [a sort of holiday promenade with music and spirituous refreshments], and some of them crooked their elbows too often."

"*Some* of them!" I repeated. "*All* of them, you mean. You 're the only sober man I 've seen in the place. How does it happen that you 're not drunk?"

"I 'm not a Christian," he replied, with quiet simplicity. "I 'm a Buriát."[1]

As a Christian—if not a member of the Holy Orthodox Church—I was silenced by the unconscious irony of the reply. The only sober man in a village of three or four hundred inhabitants proved to be a pagan, and he had just been fined fifty *kopéks* by a Christian official for not getting drunk with other good citizens, and thus showing his respect for the newly consecrated edifice and his appreciation of the benign influence of the Holy Orthodox Faith!

About ten o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, December 1st, we drove into the town of Chíta, and took up our quarters in a small, one-story log hotel kept by a man named Biáchinski and known as the "Hotel Vládivostók." There was in Chíta, as I have said in a previous chapter, a tolerably

[1] The natives in Siberia known as Buriáts are nearly all Lamaists.

large and very interesting colony of political exiles. We had made their acquaintance and had had some conversation with them on our outward journey; but as we were then making every effort to reach the mines of Karâ before the setting in of winter, we could not spend as much time with them as we wished to spend, and we therefore decided to stop for ten days or two weeks in Chíta on our return. Most of these exiles were forced colonists who had already served out terms of hard labor at the mines and who belonged to the class that the Government regarded as particularly dangerous. In view of this fact, and of the official attention that our investigations had already attracted at Karâ, it seemed to me necessary to proceed with more than ordinary caution and to cultivate the most friendly possible relations with the authorities. It was more than likely that Captain Nikólin, the gendarme commandant at the mines of Karâ, had informed the acting-governor at Chíta of our surreptitious visits to the politicals of the free command; and, if so, it was quite probable that our later movements would be watched. What would be the result of a discovery that we were visiting the politicals in Chíta every day I did not know; but as we were still apprehensive of a police search it seemed prudent to take every possible precaution. I called at once upon Colonel Svechín, who was then acting as governor in the absence of General Barabásh, gave him a tolerably full account of our experience at the mines, — omitting, of course, the episode with the political convicts, — and outlined to him our plans for the future. He was very pleasant and courteous, asked no inconvenient questions, and when I bade him good day and bowed myself out of his reception-room I felt quite reassured. Either he was not aware of the extent of our intercourse with the political exiles in his province, or he regarded such intercourse with indifference as a matter of little consequence.

Two or three days after our arrival, a wealthy merchant of the town, named Némerof, whose acquaintance I had

made through a casual call at his place of business, invited us to go with him to an amateur theatrical entertainment to be given for some benevolent object in the small theater connected with the official club. Hoping to make a few useful acquaintances, and desirous, at the same time, of showing ourselves in public as much as possible with "trustworthy" people, we accepted the invitation. Between the acts of the rather clever and creditable performance we promenaded in one of the lobbies, made the acquaintance of a number of civil and military officials, received a pleasant greeting from the acting-governor, and attracted general attention as "distinguished Americans," well known to the higher authorities of the place and upon friendly terms even with the acting-governor and chief of staff. No one, we hoped, would suspect that these distinguished foreigners had stopped in Chíta for the express purpose of extending their acquaintance with political convicts, nihilists, and terrorists.

Among the army officers to whom I was introduced between the acts was a certain Colonel Nóvikof, who, accompanied by several other officers in full uniform, was walking back and forth in the lobby. As soon as he caught my name he looked at me curiously, and, without any preliminary leading up to the subject, said, "I hear that you have been at the mines of Karâ."

"Yes," I replied, with some surprise and uneasiness; "I have just come from there."

"What did you find good there?" he inquired, looking sharply into my face.

I hardly knew what reply to make to such a question as this; but I thought that it would be safe at least to speak well of the officials, so far as I could conscientiously do so, and I therefore replied promptly that I found a good man, namely, Major Pótulof.

"Humph!" grunted the colonel, contemptuously. "I suppose he showed you everything in the most favorable light."

"There are some things that cannot be shown in a very

favorable light," I replied, feeling more and more uneasiness, but determined to take the bull by the horns.

"Did you go through the prisons?" he demanded.

"Yes," I said, "we saw most of them."

"Did they show you the 'naked command'?"

"No; I don't even know what you mean by the 'naked command.'"

"I mean a cell full of prisoners without clothing. When I first went to Karà and made a visit of inspection to the prisons, I found a *kámera* in which there were twenty-five convicts stark naked. This body of men was then known as the 'naked command.'"

"What was the explanation of it?" I inquired.

"I don't know," replied the officer with a shrug. "They simply had n't any clothes to wear.[1] Did your *good man* [a contemptuous reference to Major Pótulof] show you the solitary-confinement cells in the Middle Karà prison?"

"He did not," I replied. "What is there remarkable about them?"

"Oh, nothing," said the colonel, with assumed indifference, "except that they are not high enough to stand up in nor long enough to lie down in. You evidently did n't see anything except what they wanted you to see. I wish that I had been there; I would have shown you things as they *are*, not as your *liubéznoi khozáin* [amiable host] showed them to you."

By this time I was in a state of some bewilderment and perplexity. Could Colonel Nóvikof be sincere? Or was he merely laying a trap for me in order to ascertain what I

[1] I subsequently learned that the "naked command" was composed of convicts who made a regular practice of selling the clothing furnished them by the Government, in order to get money with which to gamble and buy liquor. As a punishment for this offense they had been shut up together in a large cell and deprived of clothing altogether. Of course the prisoners could not have disposed of their garments and bought liquor with the proceeds unless they had been aided in so doing by the prison officials. The existence of a naked command, therefore, showed the corruptibility, rather than the cruelty, of the prison administration. Colonel Nóvikof seemed desirous of giving me a contrary impression.

really thought of the Karâ prisons and the prison administration? I hardly dared say anything, for fear of making a mistake. Without waiting, however, for any remarks from me, Colonel Nóvikof said, "I lived at Karâ as commander of the Cossack battalion for three years and a half; and when I was finally relieved from duty there, a few months ago, I was so glad that I had a special thanksgiving service read in the church.

"Do you see my beard?" he demanded abruptly after a moment's pause. "It is all sprinkled with gray, is n't it? That 's the result of the human misery that I was compelled to witness at the mines. When I went there, there was n't a white hair in it. How old do you think I am?"

I replied that I should take him to be about fifty-five.

"I am only forty-five," he said bitterly; "and when I went to Karâ I was as young-looking a man as you are."

He paused for a moment, as if in gloomy retrospection, and I ventured to ask him what was the nature of the misery to which he referred.

"Misery of all kinds," he replied. "The wretched convicts are cruelly treated, flogged with rods and the *plet* [a sort of heavy cat], and worked for the benefit of their overseers, who enrich themselves at the convicts' expense. As for the suffering and injustice, I will give you an instance of it. While I was there the wife of the warden of one of the prisons accidentally discovered that her lover—a convict of the free command—was carrying on an intrigue with one of her servants, a good-looking girl belonging also to the criminal class. Enraged by jealousy, she made such representations to her husband the warden as to induce him to have the servant-girl flogged. The girl received 150 blows with the stick on her bare body, and then when she went to the *zavéduyushchi* [the governor of the penal establishment] and complained of the cruel treatment to which she had been subjected, she got ninety blows more with the *plet*,—240 blows in all,—and I stood by and saw

those executions carried out. Do you think that 's a pleasant thing? I have n't much hair left [stroking the top of his head], but all that I have has stood on end at the sights I have been forced to witness at those accursed mines. To see what one must see there one ought to have nerves of iron wire."[1]

The reader must not suppose that these extraordinary statements were made to me quietly and confidentially in a corner. We were walking back and forth in the crowded lobby of a theater with three or four other officers, and Colonel Nóvikof talked excitedly and loudly enough to be heard not only by them, but by any one who cared to listen. It may seem strange that a Cossack officer of Colonel Nóvikof's prominence should make, voluntarily, to a stranger and foreigner, such damaging admissions with regard to the working of the Russian penal system; but this was not the only time that I was surprised and puzzled by such frankness. At a later hour that same evening another officer came to me between the acts, introduced himself, and began to question me about our experience at the mines of Karâ. In less than five minutes he made the same inquiry that Colonel Nóvikof had made, viz: whether we had seen the solitary-confinement cells in the Middle Karâ prison. I replied as before in the negative, whereupon he gave me the same information with regard to their dimensions that I had already received, and added that these horrible cells

[1] I think I quote Colonel Nóvikof's words with almost perfect accuracy. They made upon me, of course, a very deep impression, and I wrote them down in my note-book as soon as I returned from the theater. Some allowance must be made, however, for personal animus on the part of the speaker. His relations with other officers at the mines, and particularly with Major Pótulof, had evidently been unpleasant, if not hostile, and he may have exaggerated, or thrown into undue prominence, evils for which they were responsible. The remarks that I have quoted are, nevertheless, interesting and significant as coming from an officer of high rank who had the best possible means of knowing the truth, and I give them for what they may be worth. Colonel Nóvikof is the same officer who told me that he would punish political offenders with the *shpitzruten*—a barbarous running of the gantlet, in the course of which the sufferer receives from two thousand to seven thousand blows from light rods.

had been used as places of confinement for political offenders, and even for cultivated women. Madam Róssikova, he said, had languished in one of those dungeons until the prison surgeon had pronounced her dying. He invited me

HOUSE OF DECEMBRIST EXILES.

THE POLITICAL EXILES' CARPENTER-SHOP, CHÍTA.

to call upon him, and said that if I was interested in prisons and the exile system he thought he could furnish me with some material. I am not at liberty to name this officer, nor to indicate the position that he held; but I can say, with-

out breach of confidence, that I did call upon him, and that I am indebted to him for many of the facts set forth in the four preceding chapters. He confirmed most of the statements made to me by the political convicts at Karâ, gave me an account of the shooting of Governor Ilyashévich that did not differ in any essential respect from the narrative of Madam Kutitónskaya herself, and permitted me to see official documents of the utmost interest and value. If he had in view any other object than the establishment of the truth, I do not know what it was.

During our stay of nearly two weeks in Chíta I spent a large part of every day with "trustworthy" citizens and officials in order to avert suspicion, and then devoted the greater part of every night to the political convicts. We met the latter, as a rule, in a carpenter-shop maintained by some of them as a means of self-support in a large two-story log house once occupied by the famous Decembrist exiles of 1825. About nine o'clock every evening, ten or fifteen politicals would assemble in a spacious upper room over this carpenter-shop, and there, at a somewhat later hour, Mr. Frost and I would join them. Fanny Morénis, a bright and very pretty girl about twenty years of age, generally acted as hostess; Madam Géllis presided over the *samovár;* and by half-past ten o'clock every evening we were all grouped about a big table on one side of the room, smoking, drinking tea, relating our adventures, and discussing all sorts of social and political questions. Among the exiles in Chíta were some of the brightest, most cultivated, most sympathetic men and women that we had met in Eastern Siberia; and I still remember, with mingled feelings of pleasure and sadness, the hours that we spent with them. We were not always depressed and gloomy, nor did we always look on the dark penal side of Russian life. Sometimes Mr. Lázaref,[1] or Mr. Valúief, would take up an old battered guitar, and sing, to its accompaniment, a melo-

[1] Mr. Lázaref has since escaped from Siberia and is now in Milwaukee, Wis.

dious Russian romance; sometimes Mr. Frost and I gave the exiles a spirited if not a finished rendering of "Bingo," "The Bull-dog," "Solomon Levi," or some other rollicking college melody; and sometimes we all sang in chorus the

A MEETING OF THE POLITICAL EXILES IN CHITA.

stirring words and music of the "Little Russian Marseillaise," the quasi-revolutionary and prohibited song "On the Volga there is a Cliff," or the martial strains of "John Brown."

Sooner or later, however, we invariably reverted to the topics that most interested us all—the condition of Russia,

the Russian revolutionary movement, and the life of political exiles in prison, on the road, or at the mines. Here I obtained many of the facts that I have set forth in previous chapters, and here I heard, for the first time, the terrible history of the Kharkóf central prison, and the narrative of the desperate hunger-strike of the four women in the prison at Irkútsk.[1] Stories more ghastly and pathetic I had never read nor imagined; and night after night I went back to the hotel in a state of emotional excitement that made it impossible for me to sleep, and equally impossible to turn my thoughts into any other channel. All that I could do was to lie for hours on the floor, picturing to myself in imagination the scenes and events that had been described or related to me with such torturing vividness. It is one thing to read in cold, expressionless type such narratives of suffering, injustice, and bereavement as those that I have tried to reproduce in the preceding chapters; it is another and quite a different thing to hear them from the trembling lips of the men and women who have been actors in the tragedies described, and who have themselves gone down into the valley of the shadow of death. If, while listening to such stories, my eyes filled with tears and my hands were clenched in fierce though silent and helpless indignation, I am not ashamed of it—it would have been a relief to me sometimes if I could have cried.

The emotional strain of our East-Siberian experience was perhaps harder to bear than the mere physical suffering. One can endure cold, hunger, jolting, and fatigue with a certain philosophic cheerfulness; but emotional excitement —the constant appeal made by suffering to sympathy—exhausts nervous strength with great rapidity and eventually depresses all the vital powers. In our case there was not only the emotional strain, but the strain of constant anxiety and apprehension. We were liable, at almost any moment, to be arrested and searched; and what the conse-

[1] Mesdames Kaválskaya, Róssikova, Bogomólets, and Kutitónskaya.

quences of such a misfortune would be we could only conjecture. No attempt had yet been made to watch or follow us, so far as we were aware; but the room adjoining ours in the hotel was occupied by four officers, including a captain or colonel of gendarmes, and Mr. Frost thought that he had more than once heard, through the thin intervening partition, a conversation among these men with regard to the real object of our Siberian journey, and a discussion of methods by which our papers might be secured, or at least subjected to police inspection. One night, during our second week's stay in Chíta, I came back to the hotel about two o'clock in the morning from a visit to the political exiles' carpenter-shop. There was not a sound nor a suggestion of life in the deserted streets of the little provincial town, the windows of the hotel were all dark, the servant who admitted me was only half awake, Mr. Frost was slumbering peacefully on a wooden bench in our room, and perfect stillness prevailed throughout the building. Apparently, everybody had been asleep for hours. The room occupied by the four officers was separated from ours only by a thin lath-and-paper wall through which there happened to be an intercommunicating door. Under this door was a vacant space of three or four inches, which, with the flimsiness of the partition, permitted sounds to pass from room to room with almost perfect freedom. Excited by the ghastly story of the murder of the political offender Sómof in the Odéssa prison, which I had just heard from one of the exiles, I could not sleep, and lighting a candle, I lay down on the floor with my head to the partition wall and tried to divert my thoughts by reading. For at least half an hour the only sound that came to my ears was Mr. Frost's soft, regular breathing. Suddenly the stillness, which was so profound as to be almost oppressive, was broken by the loud "Bang!" of a revolver almost opposite my head, on the other side of the partition. Surprised and startled, I raised myself on one elbow and listened. Nothing could be heard except a

faint rustle, made apparently by plaster-dust falling from the partition wall where the bullet had pierced it. Mr. Frost, roused from sound sleep, sat up and inquired, "What was that?"

"Somebody has just fired a revolver through our partition," I replied in a low tone.

"What time is it?"

"About half-past two. Keep quiet and listen."

With strained attention we waited fully two minutes without hearing the faintest sound. The hotel had become as still as before, and yet I knew that there were four men in the room from which the pistol-shot had come. If one of them had committed suicide—which was the first thought that flashed through my mind—why did not the others get up and strike a light? The report of the revolver was loud enough to rouse the whole hotel, and the perfect stillness that followed it was even more extraordinary and mysterious than the shot itself.

"Let 's call to them and find out what the matter is," whispered Mr. Frost.

"No," I replied in an undertone; "let somebody else find out. We 're not hurt."

I had great fear of becoming involved in some mystery or tragedy that would give the police an excuse for taking us into custody and overhauling our baggage or summoning us as witnesses, and it seemed to me best to "lie stiller than water and lower than grass," as the Russian peasants say, and await developments. Whatever might be the significance of the pistol-shot, it was none of our business unless the weapon had been aimed at us—and that seemed extremely improbable.

After the lapse of perhaps three minutes, I heard in the officers' room the clicking made by the cocking and uncocking of a revolver, followed in a few seconds by low whispering. Then one man in an undertone asked another how many more cartridges he had. Some inaudible reply was made,

after which there was whispering again for a moment or two, and finally silence. We did not hear another sound from the officers' room that night. Why that revolver-shot was fired through our partition from a perfectly dark and still room at half-past two o'clock in the morning we never ascertained. My own impression is that somebody desired to experiment upon us for fun; and if any one had questioned me about the incident on the following day, I should have said that pistol-shots in the night were so common in American hotels as to excite little or no remark, and that the only thing that surprised us was the absence of a dead body in the morning.

Whether or not the police discovered, during our stay in Chíta, that we were visiting the political convicts every day I have no means of knowing. That they became aware of it afterward I infer from the fact that the only letter I subsequently received from there, a perfectly innocent communication from the merchant Némerof, was delivered to me open—the end of the envelope having been cut off with a pair of scissors.

Up to the time of our arrival in Chíta I had carried the most important and compromising of my papers and documents in a leathern belt around my body; but they finally became so bulky and burdensome that it seemed necessary to make some other disposition of them, and in view of the possibility, if not the probability, of a police search, I determined to conceal them. The greater part of them I put into the hollow sides of a wooden box that I made for the purpose, and that was ostensibly intended to keep our dishes and tea-things in. Such a box I could carry from our sleigh to the house at every post-station without appearing to set any particular value upon it, and I could thus keep it constantly under my eye without exciting either the suspicion of the police or the cupidity of thieves. All travelers carried such boxes, and it was highly improbable that anybody would ever wonder what was in it. It explained

itself. The remainder of my documents, and a few letters from political exiles to their relatives in European Russia, I bound into the covers of books. As we were traveling with very little baggage, I had no books of my own; but the exiles in Chíta furnished me with an English copy of "David Copperfield," a bound volume of a Russian magazine which contained an article upon the exile system, and an old book of logarithms. We felt sure that "David Copperfield" and the logarithms would excite no suspicion, even if our baggage were overhauled, and we hoped that the article upon the exile system would carry the Russian magazine. Finally, I put one very important letter into a small square piece of board, upon which was mounted an oil portrait of one of the Decembrist exiles of 1825. This portrait had been found in one of the houses of the Decembrists at Chíta, and as I was a collector of curious and interesting relics, it was natural enough that I should be in possession of it. Altogether it seemed to me that my papers were very skilfully and successfully hidden. The police certainly could not find them without breaking or tearing to pieces nearly everything that I had.

SIBERIAN FREIGHT-SLEDGES.

Wednesday night, December 9th, we sang with the political exiles in Chíta for the last time the plaintive but beautiful song of the Russian revolutionists, "On the Volga there is a Cliff," distributed among them as mementos all the trinkets and small articles of value that we had, and then, with

deep and sincere regret, bade them good-by forever. Twelve hours later we were posting furiously towards Irkútsk, the capital of Eastern Siberia. For five days and nights we traveled westward at the rate of eight miles an hour, stopping only to change horses, and suffering from cold, hunger, and sleeplessness until it seemed to me that I could endure no more. We found Lake Baikál still open, but the last steamer for the season had gone, and we were forced to take the high, picturesque cornice road around the lake at its southern end. Monday evening, December 14th, we were stopped only fifty or sixty miles from Irkútsk by the absence of post-horses. For almost three months we had been cut off from all communication with the civilized world, for ten weeks we had not received a letter nor read a newspaper, and furious with impatience at finding ourselves stopped so near the capital, we hired a peasant to carry us and our baggage on a low freight-sledge to the next station. We little knew what a night of misery we were preparing for ourselves. The cold was intense; the road ran across a series of high, massive, and densely wooded mountain-ridges; the peasant's horses proved to be half dead from starvation, and after the first three miles absolutely refused to draw us up hill; we walked almost the whole distance in a temperature of twenty degrees below zero, and finally reached the next station, more dead than alive, at two o'clock in the morning. If I fell down once I fell down twenty times from weakness and exhaustion on the slippery slopes of the last hills. Tuesday, December 15th, we reëntered the city of Irkútsk, drove to the post-office and then to the Moscow Hotel, and, without waiting to wash our hands, change our dress, or refresh ourselves with food, sat down to read forty or fifty letters from home. The most recent of them were two and a half months old, and the earliest in date nearly six.

It was late in the Siberian winter when we reached Irkútsk, and the thermometer had indicated temperatures

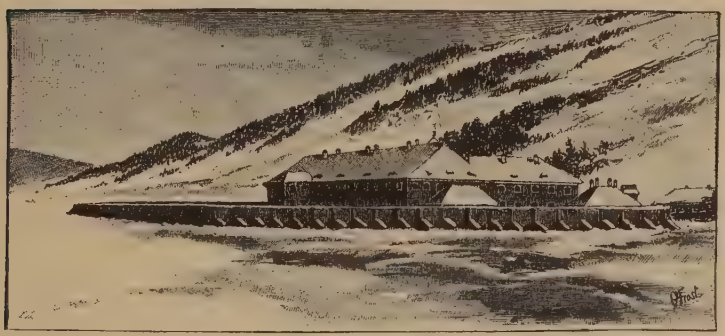
as low as thirty and thirty-five degrees below zero; but the Angará River was still open in the middle, and as there was no bridge, and the ferry-boats had ceased running, we could not get across. For more than three weeks we waited impatiently for the rapid stream to close; but as it then showed no disposition to do so, we resolved to descend its right, or eastern, bank to a point about a hundred miles nearer the arctic ocean, where, according to the reports of the peasants, a gorge had occurred and an ice bridge had formed. On Friday, January 8th, having sold our old *tárantás* and purchased with the proceeds a comfortable *pavóska*, or winter traveling-sleigh, like that shown in the illustration on this page, we sent to the post-station for a *tróika* of horses and set out by way of the Alexandrófski central prison for the ice bridge across the Angará.

SIBERIAN PAVÓSKA OR TRAVELING-SLEIGH

The Alexandrófski central prison, which at the time of our visit had the reputation of being one of the best as well as one of the largest institutions of its kind in Eastern Siberia, is situated on the right bank of the Angará River about forty miles below Irkútsk, and was built and occupied for a time as a distillery. It was remodeled and turned into a prison in 1874, and since then has been used as a place of confinement and of nominal hard labor for about a thousand convicts. I was particularly anxious to see it, because Acting-governor Petróf in Irkútsk had described it to me as "almost a model prison," and I had not thus far seen any prisons in Siberia to which such a description

would apply. After a pleasant and comfortable ride of eight hours from Irkútsk we reached the prison settlement about half-past nine o'clock Friday night, drove at once

FRONT VIEW.



SIDE VIEW.

THE ALEXANDRÓFSKI CENTRAL PRISON.

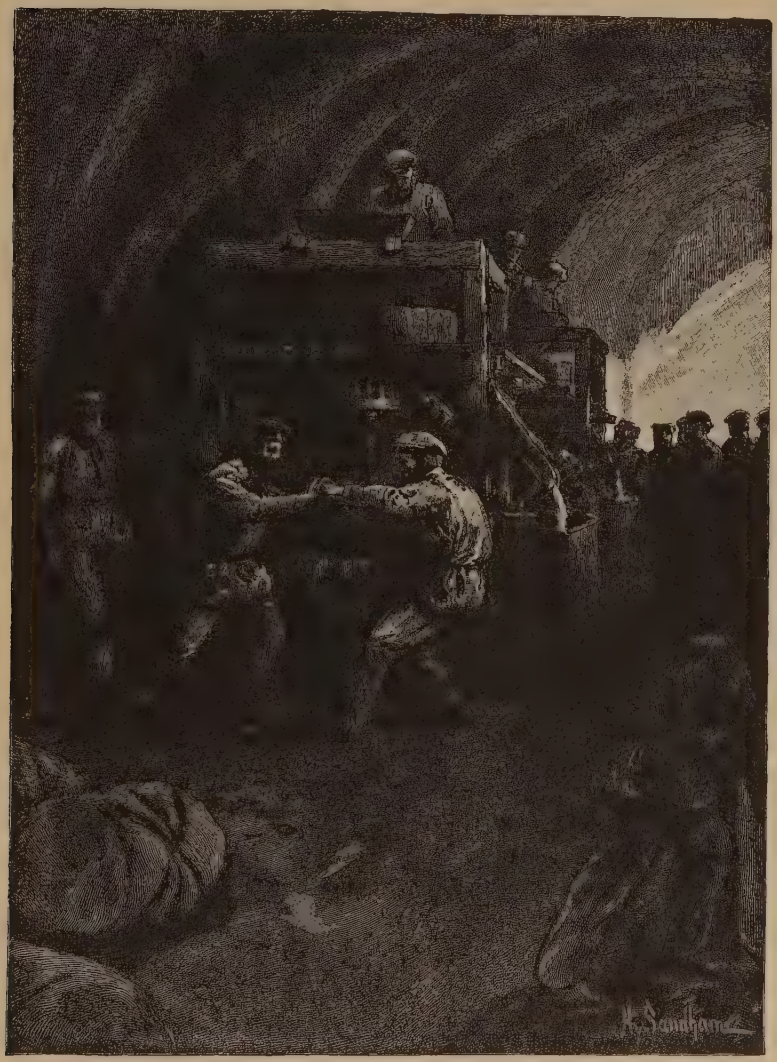
to the post-station, and, having warmed ourselves with three or four tumblers of hot tea, went to bed on the floor, as usual.

Saturday morning we called upon the prison warden, Mr. Sipiágin, who had already received notice of our coming from the authorities in Irkútsk, and asked permission to go through the institution of which he was in command. Mr. Sipiágin, a pleasant, intelligent, cultivated officer, thirty-five

or forty years of age, received us with the most cordial hospitality, insisted upon our taking a late breakfast with him, and after we had refreshed ourselves with tea, bread and butter, and delicious cutlets served with gravy and delicately browned potatoes, he went with us to the prison.

The Alexandrófski central prison is a large, two-story brick building with a tin roof, standing in a spacious inclosure formed by a high buttressed brick wall. It is somewhat irregular in form, but its greatest length is about 300 feet and its greatest width about 100, with a rather spacious courtyard in the middle. It contains fifty-seven general *kámeras*, in which a number of prisoners are shut up together, ten solitary-confinement cells, and five "secret" cells, intended for the isolation of particularly important or dangerous criminals. It contained at the time of our visit 992 convicts, while about 900 more, who had finished their terms of probation, were living outside the prison walls in the free command. We were taken first to the mills, which were large vaulted apartments in the first story, where 75 or 100 convicts were grinding rye into meal for their own use. The air here was fresh and good; the labor, although hard, was not excessive; and the men who turned the cranks of the clumsy machines were relieved by others as fast as they became tired. This, the warden informed me, was the only hard labor that the inmates of the prison were required to perform, and it occupied only three or four hours a day. From the mills we went to the *kámeras*, which filled the greater part of the large building, and which were occupied by from 15 to 75 men each. They varied greatly in size and form, but all were large enough for the number of convicts that they contained; the ceilings in them were high; the air everywhere was good; the floors and sleeping-benches were scrupulously clean; and nothing seemed to call for unfavorable criticism except perhaps the lack of bedding. In all the cells I noticed ventilators, but some of them had been stopped up with rags or articles of cloth-

ing by the prisoners themselves. The corridors into which the *kámeras* opened were high, spacious, and fairly well



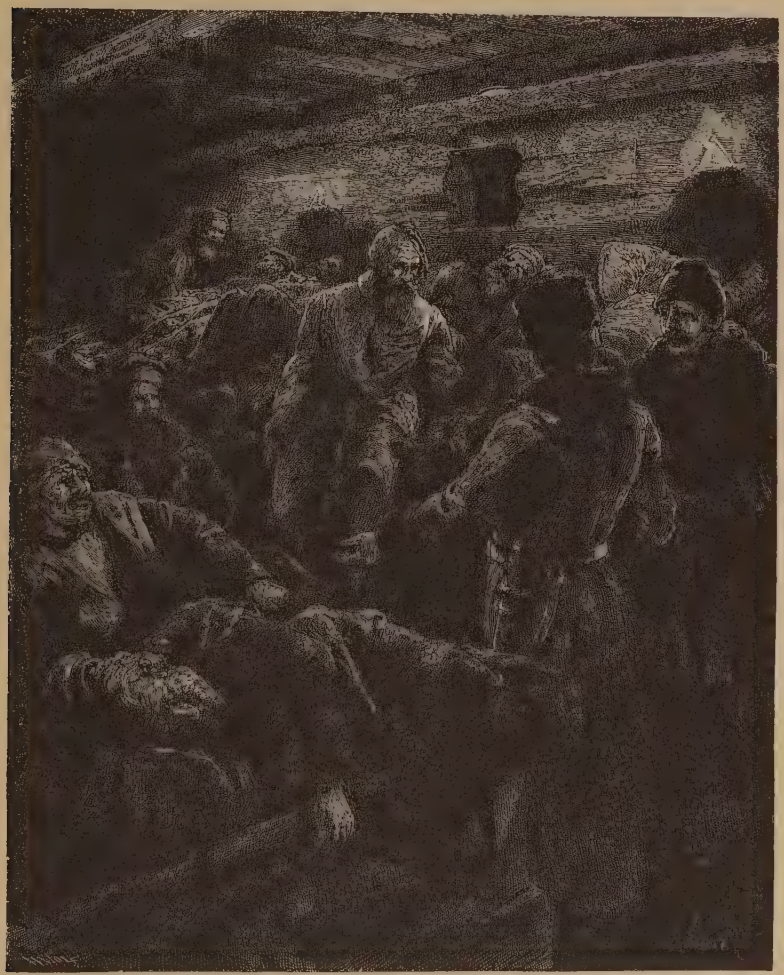
CONVICTS GRINDING RYE IN THE ALEXANDRÓFSKI CENTRAL PRISON.

lighted, and the air in them seemed to be almost as pure as that out-of-doors. From the *kámeras* we went to the

kitchens, where food was prepared every day for more than a thousand men, and where I could discover nothing that was out of harmony with the neatness and good order that prevailed in other parts of the building. I tasted some of the bread and soup furnished to the prisoners and found both palatable and good. The convict ration, Mr. Sipiágin informed me, consisted of three pounds of rye bread, about seven ounces of meat, and three ounces of barley per day, with potatoes or other vegetables occasionally. Tea and sugar were not supplied by the Government, but might be purchased by the prisoners with their own money. When we came out of the kitchens the warden asked us if we would not like to see the school-room. I replied that we certainly should, inasmuch as we had never seen such a thing as a school-room in a Russian prison, and did not suppose that such a thing existed. Mr. Sipiágin laughed, and conducted us to a clean, well-lighted apartment in the second story, which had been fitted up by the convicts themselves with rude desks of domestic manufacture, and had been furnished by the prison authorities with a black-board, a large globe, a wall map of Siberia and another of the Holy Land, and a few cheap lithographs. There were no scholars in the room at the time of our visit to it, but the warden said that the convicts frequently came there to read, sing, or listen to instructive talks from the priest. They were greatly in need of books. They had a few tracts and testaments, left there some years before by the Rev. Mr. Lansdell,[1] but they wanted school-books and a library. From the school-room we went to the shops, where 25 or 30 tailors, shoemakers, and carpenters were hard at work, and where the air was filled with the pleasant odors of fresh pine shavings and Russia leather. The convicts were at liberty, the warden said, to do any work that they were capable of doing, and they received two-thirds of all the

[1] This was the only place in Siberia where I found any trace of the books and tracts that Mr. Lansdell distributed.

money that they earned. One-third was turned over to them, or held by the warden subject to their order, at the



A VISIT TO THE ALEXANDRÓFSKI CENTRAL PRISON AT NIGHT.

time payment was received for the products of their industry; one-third was withheld, to be given to them at the expiration of their terms of probation; and one-third was retained by the Government. After paying a visit to the hospital, which contained only forty-two patients and which

was clean, well ventilated, and in perfect order, we expressed ourselves as satisfied with our inspection of the prison, and returned to Mr. Sipiágin's house. The warden seemed to be very much gratified when I said to him frankly and honestly that I had inspected fifteen prisons in Eastern Siberia, that the one under his command was by far the best of them all, and that I did not see how anything more could be done by local and personal effort to make it better. It was not a "model prison," but at least it would serve as a model for the rest of Siberia.

At a late hour Sunday night Mr. Sipiágin, Captain Makófski, the prison surgeon, Mr. Frost, and I went through the prison again to see what was the state of things after the prisoners had retired. The convicts were lying asleep in rows on the plank *nári* without pillows or bed-clothing, and as we entered their dimly lighted cells many of them started up in surprise and alarm, as if afraid that we were about to drag somebody out to execution; but none of them spoke, and we went through six or seven *kámeras* in silence. There were *paráshas*, or excrement-buckets, in all the cells, and the air seemed more contaminated than it had been in the daytime; but even at its worst it was better than in any other prison we had visited. Taken altogether, the Alexandrófski prison seemed to me to be in the highest degree creditable to its warden, Mr. Sipiágin, and not discreditable to the Russian prison administration. It gives me great pleasure to say this, because I did not find much to approve in Siberian prisons generally, and I am glad to have an opportunity to praise where praise is deserved.

Monday morning, after having thanked Mr. Sipiágin and his bright, intelligent wife for their courtesy and hospitality, we bade them good-by and resumed our journey. The road, which lay along the edge of the river, under the high, abrupt hills that bound the Angará on the east, had been overflowed by the backing up of the water due to the formation of the ice gorge, and it was with the greatest diffi-

culty that we could make our way at all over the huge cakes of ice with which it was bestrewn, or along the steep hillside above it. The slope of the bank finally became so steep that our horses could no longer stand upon it, and

THROUGH THE ICE ON THE ANGARÁ RIVER.

we were forced to drive out upon the thin, treacherous ice of the half-frozen river. While we were going at a brisk trot just beyond the village of Olón, the ice suddenly gave way under us, and, with a great crash, horses, sleigh, and all went through into the deep, swift current of the river. Fortunately, the widely extended outriggers of our sleigh pre-

vented it from sinking at once, and by the exercise of agility and good judgment we all succeeded in getting out of it and securing a foothold on the solid ice. We cut our horses free from their harness, dragged them out one by one, hauled out our sledge with fresh horses, and returned to Olón to repair damages. After consultation with the villagers we decided that it would not be prudent to continue our journey down the river in that way. Night was coming on, the river road was impassable, and if we should break through the ice again, in the darkness and away from help, the consequences might be more serious. Late in the evening a good-looking young peasant, tempted by an offer of fifteen *rúbles*, which was about five times the usual rate, agreed to take us to the next village below by a circuitous and difficult route over the mountains. There was no road; but as the snow was not very deep, he thought he could make his way through, and at half-past ten o'clock we started. In all our East-Siberian experience I remember no night more full of hardship, anxiety, and suffering than the one that followed. About midnight a storm came on with high wind, flying snow, and a temperature of fifteen or twenty degrees below zero; we lost our way in the darkness, capsized into ravines, floundered for hours in deep snow-drifts, and lifted and tugged at our heavy, unwieldy sleigh until we were utterly exhausted and half frozen. About four o'clock in the morning I began to feel, at every respiration, a sharp, cutting pain in my right lung, and in less than half an hour I found myself completely disabled. Leaving Mr. Frost and the driver to struggle with the snow-drifts and the exhausted, dispirited horses, I crawled back into the half-capsized sleigh, pulled the sheepskin robe over my shivering body, and gave myself up to gloomy forebodings of pneumonia. What happened between that time and morning I do not remember. Just before daybreak I was aroused by the barking of dogs, and, looking out, was gladdened by

A STORM AT NIGHT IN THE MOUNTAINS OF THE ANGARÁ.

the sight of fire-lighted smoke and sparks from the chimneys of three or four log houses. It was the small peasant

CROSSING THE ICE BRIDGE OVER THE ANGARÁ.

village of Páshka. After warming and refreshing ourselves with tea, we pushed on to the settlement of Kámenka, and late in the afternoon crossed the ice bridge over the Angará, and stopped for the night in the comfortable post-station house on the great Siberian road.

CHAPTER XI

THE GREAT SIBERIAN ROAD IN WINTER

IT is customary in Siberia, when traveling by post, to ride night and day, without other rest than that which can be obtained in one's sleigh; but when we reached the great Siberian road at the station of Cherómka I was still suffering from the results of the previous night's exposure to storm and cold in the mountains of the Angará, and at every respiration was warned by a sharp, cutting pain in one lung that it would be prudent to seek shelter and keep warm until I should be able to breathe freely. But it was very difficult to keep warm in that post-station. Almost every hour throughout the night travelers stopped there to change horses or to drink tea, and with every opening of the door a cold wind blew across the bare floor where we lay, condensing the moisture of the atmosphere into chilly clouds of vapor, and changing the temperature of the room from twenty to thirty degrees in as many seconds. I had taken the precaution, however, to bring our large sheepskin bag into the house, and by burying myself in the depths of that I not only escaped being chilled, but succeeded, with the aid of medicinal remedies, in getting into a profuse perspiration. This soon relieved the pleuritic pain in my side, and in the morning I felt able to go on. Neither of us had had any sleep, but to the experienced Siberian traveler deprivation of sleep for a night or two is a trifling hardship. I do not think that Mr. Frost had two consecutive hours of sleep in the whole week that we spent on the road between the

Alexandrófski central prison and Krasnoyársk; but when we reached the latter place he went to bed, with his clothes on, and slept sixteen hours without waking.

The route that we intended to follow on our return journey to St. Petersburg differed a little from that which we had pursued in coming into Siberia, and included two important towns that we had not yet visited, namely, Minusínsk and Tobólsk. The former we expected to reach by making a detour of about four hundred miles to the southward from Krasnoyársk, and the latter by taking a more northerly route between Omsk and Tiumén than the one over which we had passed on our way eastward. Our equipment for the long and difficult journey that lay before us consisted of a strongly built *pavóska*, or seatless traveling-sleigh, with low runners, wide outriggers, and a sort of carriage-top which could be closed with a leather curtain in stormy weather; a very heavy sheepskin bag six feet wide and nine feet long in which we could both lie side by side at full length; eight or ten pillows and cushions of various sizes to fill up chinks in the mass of baggage and to break the force of the jolting on rough roads; three overcoats apiece of soft shaggy sheepskin, so graded in size and weight that we could adapt ourselves to any temperature from the freezing-point to eighty degrees below; very long and heavy felt boots known in Siberia as *válinki;* fur caps, mittens, and a small quantity of provisions consisting chiefly of tea, sugar, bread, condensed milk, boiled ham, frozen soup in cakes, and a couple of roasted grouse. Our heavy baggage had been packed as carefully as possible in the bottom of the *pavóska*, so as to make a comparatively smooth and level foundation; the interstices had been stuffed with pillows and cushions; the somewhat lumpy surface had then been covered to a depth of twelve or fourteen inches with straw; and, finally, over all had been spread our spare overcoats, blankets, and the big sheepskin bag, with a quantity of pillows at the back.

For a day or two after we crossed the Angará we saw nothing of particular interest. In several villages through which we passed between Cherómka and Nízhni Údinsk the *étapes* were evidently occupied by exile parties; but we did not happen to see such a party on the march until Wednesday, and it came upon us then very suddenly and unexpectedly. The day was cold and stormy, with a high wind and flying snow, and we were lying half buried in our sheepskin bag, watching for the next *verst*-post. The atmosphere was so thick with snowflakes that we could not see the road distinctly for a greater distance than seventy-five or one hundred yards, and the party of exiles was fairly upon us before we discovered that it was not—as we at first supposed—a train of *obózes*, or freight-sleighs. I was not absolutely sure of its nature until the head of the column was so near us that I could make out the muskets of the advance-guard of Cossacks and hear the familiar clinking of the prisoners' leg-fetter chains. I then ordered our *yamshchík* to drive out into the deep snow at one side of the road and there stop. The general appearance of the party, as it passed us, was very different from the appearance of the similar party whose departure from Tomsk we had watched in August. Then the convicts were all in their light summer costume of gray, their faces were black with sunburn, and they were enveloped in a cloud of fine yellow dust raised by their shuffling, slipper-clad feet from the powdery road. The exiles before us were all dressed in reddish *pólu-shúbas*, or short overcoats of sheepskin, and *bródnias*, or high-topped leather boots; their faces were pallid from long confinement in the Tomsk forwarding prison, and they were wading slowly and laboriously through fresh-fallen snow. The order of march was the same as in the summer, but on account of the storm and the condition of the road there seemed to be some relaxation of discipline, and a good deal of straggling and disorder. The dress of the marching convicts consisted of the usual gray Tam o' Shanter cap, with a

handkerchief, a ragged tippet, or an old stocking tied over it in such a way as to protect the ears; a *pólu-shúba*, with the reddish tanned side out; long, loose leather boots, which had been stuffed around the feet and ankles with hay to make them warmer; woolen trousers, foot-wrappers, or short woolen stockings, and big leather mittens. The leg-fetters, in most cases, were worn inside the boots, and the chain that united them was looped up in the middle by means of a strap attached to the leather waist-belt. From this point of support it hung down to the ankle on each side between the tucked-in trouser-leg and the boot. With some slight changes—such, for example, as the substitution of a fur hood for the flimsy Tam o' Shanter cap—the dress, it seemed to me, would afford adequate warmth in ordinary winter weather to men whose blood was kept in vigorous circulation by exercise; but it was by no means sufficient for the protection of sick or disabled convicts who were exposed in open vehicles for eight or ten hours at a stretch to all sorts of weather. I noticed a number of such incapables lying in the shallow, uncomfortable one-horse sleighs at the rear of the column, and clinging or crouching together as if to seek warmth in mutual contact. They all seemed to be half frozen to death.

As the straggling column passed us, a convict here and there left the ranks, apparently with the permission of the guard, and, approaching our *pavóska* with bared head and extended cap, begged us, in the peculiar, half-wailing chant of the *milosérdnaya*,[1] to "pity the unfortunate" and to "have mercy on the poor and needy, for Christ's sake." I knew that money given to them would probably be used in gambling or go to the *maidánshchik*[2] in payment for *vódka;* but the poor wretches looked so cold, tired, hungry, and

[1] The exiles' begging song, which I have already described and translated.

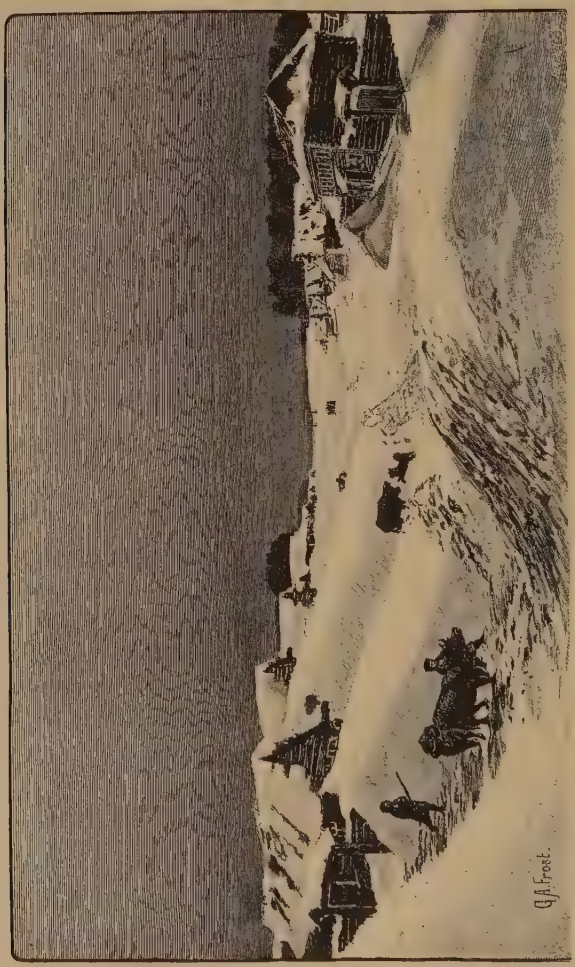
[2] The *maidánshchik* occupies something like the same position in a convict party that a sutler occupies in a regiment of soldiers. Although a prisoner himself, he is allowed, by virtue of long-established custom, to keep a small stock of such luxuries as tea, sugar, and white bread for sale to his

miserable, as they tramped past us through the drifting snow on their way to the distant mines of the Trans-Baikál, that my feelings ran away with my prudential philosophy, and I put a few *kopéks* into every gray cap that was presented to me. The convicts all stared at us with curiosity as they passed; some greeted us pleasantly, a few removed their caps, and in five minutes they were gone, and a long, dark, confused line of moving objects was all that I could see as I looked after them through the white drift of the storm.

After we passed the party of convicts our monotonous life of night-and-day travel was not diversified by a single noteworthy incident. Now and then we met a rich merchant or an army officer posting furiously towards Irkútsk, or passed a long caravan of rude one-horse sledges laden with hide-bound chests of tea for the Nízhni Nóvgorod fair, but we saw no more exiles; the country through which we passed was thinly settled and uninteresting, and the wretched little villages where we stopped to change horses, or to refresh ourselves with tea, were literally buried in drifts of snow. At the post-station of Kamishétskaya, five hundred and thirty *versts* west of Irkútsk, we overtook two political offenders named Shamárin and Peterson who had just finished their terms of administrative exile in Eastern Siberia, and were on their way back to European Russia. We had made their acquaintance some weeks before in Irkútsk, and had agreed to travel with them, if possible, as far as Krasnoyársk; but our route differed somewhat from theirs at the outset, and, owing to our detention at the Alexandrófski central prison, and to our various mishaps on the Angará, we had fallen a little behind them. They greeted us joyously, shared their supper with us, and after an hour or two of animated conversation, in which we re-

fellow-prisoners; and at the same time, with the aid of the soldiers of the convoy whom it is not difficult to bribe, he deals surreptitiously in tobacco, playing-cards, and *vódka*.

lated to one another our several adventures and experiences, we put on our heavy *shúbas*, again climbed into our respective *pavóskas*, and with two *tróikas* of horses went on together.



A VILLAGE ON THE GREAT SIBERIAN ROAD

As we approached the town of Kansk, Thursday, January 14th, the sky cleared and the weather suddenly became colder. The thermometer fell that night to thirty degrees below zero, and on the following night to forty degrees below. We continued to travel without stop, but suffered

intensely from cold, particularly during the long hours between midnight and dawn, when it was impossible to get any warm food at the post-stations, and when all our vital powers were at their lowest ebb. More than once, notwithstanding the weight and warmth of our outer clothing, we became so stiff and chilled between stations that we could hardly get out of our *pavóska.* Sleep, of course, was out of the question. Even if the temperature had not made it perilous, the roughness of the road would have rendered it impossible. Under the conjoint action of a dozen howling arctic gales, and four or five thousand pounding freight-sledges, the deep snow that lay on this part of the road had drifted, and had packed into a series of huge transverse waves, known to travelers in Siberia as *ukhábi.* These billows of solidified snow measured four or five feet vertically from trough to summit, and fifteen or twenty feet horizontally from crest to crest, and the jolting and banging of our heavy *pavóska,* as it mounted the slope of one wave and plunged into the hollow of the next, jarred every bone and shocked every nerve-ganglion in one's body. I finally became so much exhausted, as a result of cold, sleeplessness, and jolting, that at every post-station, particularly in the night, I would throw myself on the floor, without blanket or pillow, and catch five or ten minutes' sleep while the horses were being harnessed. At the lonely post-station of Kuskúnskaya, about eleven o'clock one night, I threw myself down in this way on a narrow plank bench in the travelers' room, fell asleep, and dreamed that I had just been invited to make an extempore address to a Sunday-school. The school was in the church of a religious denomination called the "Holy Monopolists." I inquired who the "Holy Monopolists" were, and was informed that they were a new sect consisting of people who believed in only one thing. I wanted very much to ask what that one thing was, but felt ashamed to do so, because it seemed to me that I ought to know without asking. I entered the Sunday-school room,

SNOW-WAVES, OR UKHÁBI, NEAR KRASNOYÁRSK.

which was an amphitheater of seats with a low platform in the middle, and saw, standing on the platform and acting in the capacity of superintendent, a well-known citizen of Norwalk, Ohio, whom I had not seen since boyhood.

All the scholars of the Sunday-school, to my great surprise, were standing in their places with their backs to the platform. As I came in, however, the superintendent said, "You will now please resume your seats," and the boys and girls all turned around and sat down. The superintendent then gave out a hymn, and while it was being sung I made a few notes on the back of an envelope to aid me in the extempore address that I was about to deliver. I decided to give the scholars a talk on the comparative merits of Buddhism and Mohammedanism, and I was just considering the question whether I should not also include fetishism when the hymn came to an end. The superintendent then announced, "We will now proceed to the lessons of the day." "Good!" I said to myself; "that will give me time to think up my speech."

As the recitation began I noticed, to my surprise, that all the scholars held in their hands big, round soda-biscuits, which they looked at now and then as if they were lesson-books. I did not have time, however, to investigate this remarkable phenomenon, because it was urgently necessary that I should get my extempore remarks into some sort of shape before the superintendent should call upon me to speak. I paid no heed, therefore, to the questions that he was propounding to the scholars until he came to one that nobody, apparently, could answer. He repeated it solemnly several times, pausing for a reply, until at last it attracted my attention. It was, "Who was the first progressive-euchre player that after his death was brought back from Alaska amid the mourning of a nation?" As I glanced around at the faces of the scholars I could see that everybody had given up this extraordinary conundrum, and I turned with interest to the superintendent, expecting that he would inform us who this lamented Alaskan euchre-player was. Instead of doing so, however, he bowed towards me and said, "The distinguished friend whom we have with us today will please tell us who was the first progressive-euchre

player that after his death was brought back from Alaska amid the mourning of a nation." A cold chill ran down my spine. It suddenly flashed upon me that this must be an elementary fact that even school-children were expected to know—and I was so ignorant that I had never even heard of an Alaskan euchre-player. In order to gain a moment's time in which to collect my faculties I said, "Show me the question." The superintendent handed me a big, hot soda-biscuit, as if it were a book. I examined it carefully on both sides, but could not find on it anything that looked like printing. The superintendent thereupon pulled the two halves apart, and showed me the question stamped in Thibetan characters around the inside of the biscuit about half an inch from the edge. I found in the queer-looking letters no clue to the answer, and in an agony of shame at being forced to confess to a Sunday-school of "Holy Monopolists" that I did not know who was the first progressive-euchre player that died in Alaska and was brought back amid the mourning of a nation I awoke. For a moment I could not recover my mental hold upon life. I was apparently in a place where I had never yet been, and over me were standing two extraordinary figures that I could not remember ever before to have seen. One of them, a tall, powerful man with black, bushy, Circassian-like hair, and blazing blue eyes, was dressed in a long, spotted reindeer-skin *kukhlánka*[1] and high fur boots, while the other, who seemed to be an official of some kind, had on a blue uniform with a double row of brass buttons down the front of his coat, and was holding over my head a kerosene lamp. "What 's the matter, Mr. Kennan?" inquired the figure in the reindeer-skin *kukhlánka.* "You have been moaning as if you were in pain."

As memory slowly resumed its throne I recognized in the speaker my exile traveling companion Peterson, and in

[1] A very heavy fur blouse or overshirt covering the body from the neck to the calf of the leg, and confined about the waist with a sash.

the official the post-station master. "I have had a bad dream," I replied. "How long have I been asleep?"

"We have been here only ten minutes," replied Peterson, looking at his watch, "and I don't think you have been asleep more than five. The horses are ready."

With stiff and aching limbs I hobbled out to the *pavóska*, crept into the sheepskin bag beside Mr. Frost, and began another long, cold, and dreary night-ride.

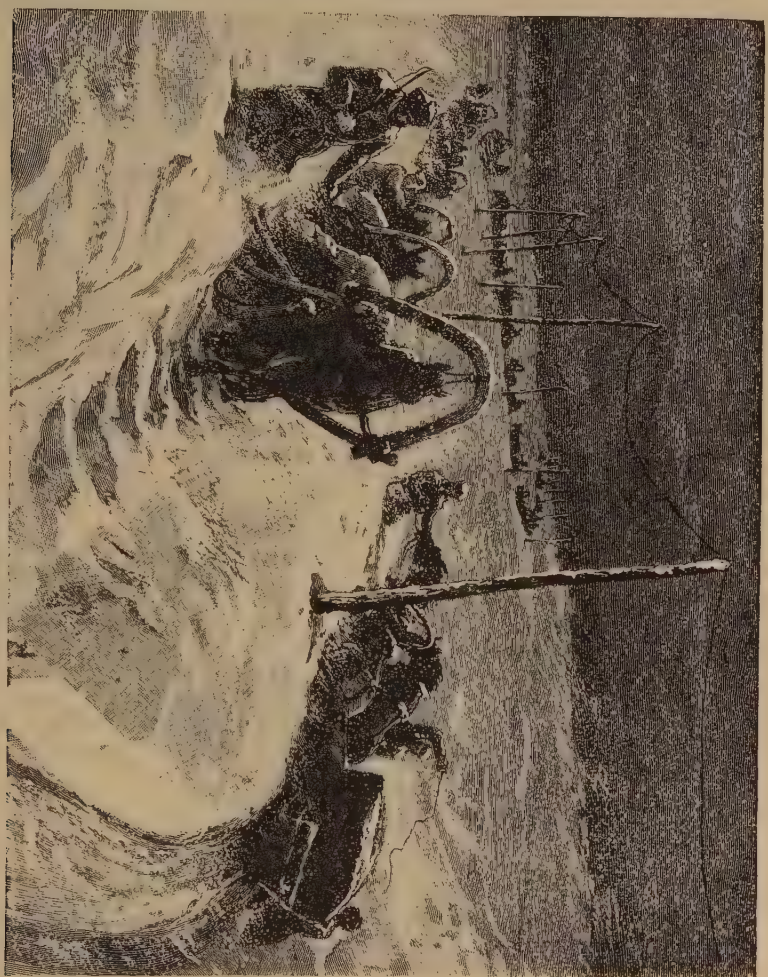
Between Kuskúnskaya and Krasnoyársk we experienced the lowest temperature of the winter,—forty-five degrees below zero,—and had an opportunity to observe again the phenomena of extreme cold. Clouds of vapor rose all the time from the bodies of our horses; the freight-wagon caravans were constantly enshrouded in mist, and frequently, after passing one of them, we would find the road foggy with frozen moisture for a distance of a quarter of a mile. When we opened the door of a station-house a great volume of steam seemed to rush into it ahead of us; little jets of vapor played around the holes and crevices of the windows and doors; and in a warm room white frost accumulated to a thickness of nearly half an inch upon the inner ends of iron bolts that went through the window-casings to the outside air. Throughout Friday and Saturday, January 15th and 16th, we stopped to drink tea at almost every post-station we passed, and even then we were constantly cold. This was due partly to the extreme severity of the weather, and partly to the fact that we were compelled, every five or ten miles, to get out of our *pavóska* and help the horses to drag it through the deep soft snow at the side of the road, where we had been forced to go in order to get past a long train of freight-sledges. Sunday, January 17th, nine days after our departure from Irkútsk, we drove into the provincial town of Krasnoyársk, having made, with forty-three relays of post-horses, a journey of about seven hundred miles. Mr. Frost and I took up our quarters in the same hotel at which we had stopped on our

way into Siberia the previous summer, and Messrs. Shamárin and Peterson went to the house of an acquaintance.

In the course of the three days that we spent in Krasnoyársk we renewed our acquaintance with Mr. Innokénti Kuznetsóf, the wealthy mining proprietor at whose house we had been so hospitably entertained on our way eastward five months before; took breakfast with Mr. Sávenkof, the director of the Krasnoyársk normal school, whose collection of archæological relics and cliff pictographs greatly interested us; and spent one afternoon with Colonel Zagárin, inspector of exile transportation for Eastern Siberia. With the permission of the latter we also made a careful examination on Wednesday of the Krasnoyársk city prison, the exile forwarding prison, and the prison hospital; and I am glad to be able to say a good word for all of them. The prisons were far from being model institutions of their kind, of course, and at certain seasons of the year I have no doubt that they were more or less dirty and overcrowded; but at the time when we inspected them they were in better condition than any prisons that we had seen in Siberia, except the military prison at Ust Kámenogórsk and the Alexandrófski central prison near Irkútsk. The hospital connected with the Krasnoyársk prisons seemed to me to be worthy of almost unqualified praise. It was scrupulously clean, perfectly ventilated, well supplied, apparently, with bed-linen, medicines, and surgical appliances, and in irreproachable sanitary condition generally. It is possible, of course, that in the late summer and early fall, when the great annual tide of exiles is at its flood, this hospital becomes as much overcrowded and as foul as the hospital of the forwarding prison at Tomsk; but at the time when we saw it I should have been willing, if necessary, to go into it for treatment myself.

The Krasnoyársk city prison was a large two-story building of stuccoed brick resembling in type the forwarding prison at Tiumén. Its *kámeras*, or common cells, were

rather small, but none of them seemed to be crowded, and the inscriptions over their doors, such as "murderers," "passportless," and "politicals," showed that an attempt at least had been made to classify the prisoners and to keep them



PASSING A TRAIN OF FREIGHT-SLEDGES.

properly separated. There were wheel-ventilators in most of the cell-windows and ventilating-pipes in the walls; the stone floors of the corridors were clean; the closet fixtures and plumbing were in fairly good condition; and although

the air in some of the cells was heavy and lifeless, and had the peculiar characteristic prison odor, it could be breathed without much discomfort, and without any of the repulsion and disgust that we had felt in the overcrowded cells of the prisons in Tiumén, Tomsk, Irkútsk, and at the mines. The exile forwarding prison, which stood near the city prison in a stockaded yard, consisted of three large one-story log buildings of the Tomsk type, and presented to the eye nothing that was particularly interesting or new. It did not contain more than half the number of prisoners that, apparently, could be accommodated in it; some of the *kámeras* were entirely empty, and the air everywhere was fresh and good.

By a fortunate chance we reached this prison just in time to see the departure of a marching party of two hundred and seventy male convicts destined for the province of Yakútsk and the mines and prisons of the Trans-Baikál. It was a bitterly cold morning, and two-thirds of the mustered party were walking back and forth in the prison yard, trying, by means of physical exercise, to keep themselves warm while waiting for the medical examination of the other third. After watching them for a moment we entered a large new log building standing a little apart from the prison proper, where we found the prison surgeon, an intelligent, kindly looking man, engaged in making a physical examination of seventy-five or eighty convicts who had declared themselves unable to march. To my inexperienced eye all of them looked thin, pallid, and miserable enough to be excused from a march of twenty miles in such weather and over such a road; but the doctor, after a brief examination by means of scrutiny, touch, and the stethoscope, dismissed as imaginary or frivolous the complaints of nine men out of every ten, and ordered sleighs for the rest. In less than half an hour all was in readiness for a start. The soldiers of the convoy, with shouldered rifles, formed a cordon outside the gate to receive the party; the prison blacksmith made his appearance with hammers, rivets, and

EXAMINATION OF POLITICAL CONVICTS' LEG-FETTERS AT THE PRISON GATE.

spare irons, and carefully examined the leg-fetters of the chained convicts as they came out; the incapables climbed into the one-horse sleighs that were awaiting them; an under-officer counted the prisoners again, to make sure that they were all there; and at the command "March!" the whole party instantly put itself in motion, the soldiers at the head of the column setting so rapid a pace that many of the convicts were forced into a run. In three minutes they were out of sight.

Marching parties of exiles leave Tomsk and Krasnoyársk every week throughout the winter, and go through to their destination without regard to weather, and with no more regard to the condition of the road than is necessary to determine whether it is passable or absolutely impassable. It would be perfectly easy, by making use of horses and vehicles, to transport the whole annual contingent of exiles from Tomsk to Irkútsk during the summer months, and thus relieve them from the suffering that they now endure as the necessary result of exposure to winter cold and winter storms; but for some unknown reason the Government has always persistently refused to take this step in the direction of humane reform. It cannot explain nor defend its refusal by pleading considerations of expense, because the cost of transporting ten thousand exiles from Tomsk to Irkútsk with horses would actually be much less than the cost of sending them on foot. Before me, as I write, lies an official report of Colonel Vinokúrof, inspector of exile transportation for Western Siberia, in which that officer shows that if all the convicts for the whole year were despatched from Moscow in the summer, and were carried from Tomsk to Áchinsk in one-horse wagons instead of being forced to walk, the expense of delivering them in the latter place would be reduced by almost 50,000 *rúbles*.[1]

[1] The part of the great Siberian road that lies between Tomsk and Áchinsk, 260 miles in extent, is the only part of the exile marching route over which Colonel Vinokúrof has jurisdiction, and for that reason his figures and estimates relate to it alone. In the report to which I refer he makes an itemized statement of the cost of sending 9417 exiles on foot from Tomsk to

The late Colonel Zagárin, inspector of exile transportation for Eastern Siberia, told me in the course of a long conversation that we had on the subject in Krasnoyársk, that in 1882 or 1883 he made a detailed report to Governor-general Anúchin in which he set forth the evils of the present system of forwarding exiles on foot the year round at the rate of only one party a week, and recommended that the Government restrict the deportation of criminals to the summer months, and then forward them swiftly to their destinations in wagons with relays of horses at the rate of a party every day. He showed conclusively to the governor-general, he said, by means of official statistics and contractors' estimates, that the cost of carrying the annual quota of exiles in wagons from Áchinsk to Irkútsk [780 miles] during the summer months would be fourteen *rúbles* less per capita, and more than 100,000 *rúbles* less per annum, than the cost of sending them over the same distance on foot in the usual way. Besides this lessening of expense, there would be a saving, he said, of at least sixty days in the time occupied by the journey, to say nothing of the economy of human life that would be effected by shortening the period of confinement in the forwarding prisons and *étapes*, and by making the season of exile-travel coincide

Áchinsk in the year 1884, and says: "It thus appears that the expense of forwarding 9417 exiles from Tomsk to Áchinsk — on the basis of a twenty-one days' trip — is not less than 130,342 *rúbles*. This is at the rate of thirteen *rúbles* and seventy-five *kopeks* for every marching prisoner, while the cost of a pair of post-horses from Tomsk to Áchinsk, at the regular established rate, is only eleven *rúbles* and sixty-four *kopéks*." In other words, according to Colonel Vinokúrof's figures, it would be actually cheaper to hire relays of post-horses for every convict and to send him to his destination as if he were a private traveler — or even a Government courier — than to march him across Siberia "by *étape*" in the usual way. Colonel Vinokúrof then makes an itemized statement of the expense of carrying 9417 exiles from Tomsk to Áchinsk in wagons with relays of horses, and shows that it would not exceed 80,817 *rúbles*. The saving that would be effected, therefore, by the substitution of this method of deportation for the other would be 49,525 *rúbles*, or about $25,000 per annum, on a distance of only 260 miles. At the same rate the saving for the distance between Tomsk and the mines of Karà would be more than $175,000 per annum, provided all the prisoners went through.

with the season of good weather and good roads. The overcrowding of the Tomsk forwarding prison, with its attendant suffering and mortality, would at once be relieved by the daily shipment of exiles eastward in wagons; the periodical epidemics of typhus fever, due chiefly to overcrowding, would cease; the corrupting influence of *étape* life upon first offenders and upon the innocent families of banished criminals would be greatly weakened; and, finally, the exiles would reach their destination in a state of comparative health and vigor, instead of being broken down on the road by the hardships and exposures of a thousand-mile winter march.

"Why in the name of all that is reasonable has not this change been made?" I said to Colonel Zagárin when he finished explaining to me the nature of his report. "If it would be cheaper, as well as more humane, to forward the exiles only in summer and in wagons, why does n't the Government do it? Who can have any interest in opposing a reform that is economical as well as philanthropical?"

"You had better inquire when you get to St. Petersburg," replied Colonel Zagárin, shrugging his shoulders. "All that we can do here is to suggest."

The reason why changes that are manifestly desirable, that are in the direction of economy, and that, apparently, would injure no one, are not made in Russia is one of the most puzzling and exasperating things that are forced upon a traveler's attention. In every branch of the administration one is constantly stumbling upon abuses or defects that have long been recognized, that have been commented upon for years, that are apparently prejudicial to the interests of everybody, and that, nevertheless, continue to exist. If you ask an explanation of an official in Siberia, he refers you to St. Petersburg. If you inquire of the chief of the prison department in St. Petersburg, he tells you that he has drawn up a "project" to cope with the evil, but that this "project" has not yet been approved by the Minister of the

Interior. If you go to the Ministry of the Interior, you learn that the "project" requires a preliminary appropriation of money,—even although its ultimate effect may be to save money,—and that it cannot be carried into execution without the assent and coöperation of the Minister of Finance. If you follow the "project" to the Ministry of Finance, you are told that it has been sent back through the Minister of the Interior to the chief of the prison department for "modification." If you still persist in your determination to find out why this thing is not done, you may chase the modified "project" through the prison department, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Finance to the Council of the Empire. There you discover that, inasmuch as certain cross-and-ribbon-decorated senators and generals, who barely know Siberia by name, have expressed a doubt as to the existence of the evil with which the "project" is intended to deal, a special "commission" [with salaries amounting to twenty thousand *rúbles* a year and mileage] has been appointed to investigate the subject and make a report. If you pursue the commission to Siberia and back, and search diligently in the proceedings of the Council of the Empire for its report, you ascertain that the document has been sent to the Ministry of the Interior to serve as a basis for a new "project," and then, as ten or fifteen years have elapsed and all the original projectors are dead, everything begins over again. At no stage of this circumrotatory process can you lay your hand on a particular official and say, "Here! You are responsible for this —what do you mean by it?" At no stage, probably, can you find an official who is opposed to the reform or who has any personal interest in defeating it; and yet the general effect of the circumrotatory process is more certainly fatal to your reformatory project than any amount of intelligent and active opposition. The various bureaus of the provincial governor-general's office, the chief prison department, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Finance, the

Ministry of Justice, the Council of Ministers, and the Council of the Empire constitute a huge administrative maelstrom of ignorance and indifference, in which a "project" revolves slowly, month after month and year after year, until it is finally sucked down out of sight, or perhaps thrown by a fortuitous eddy of personal or official interest into the great gulf-stream current of real life.[1]

On the occasion of our first visit to Krasnoyársk, in the summer, we had not been able to find there any political exiles, or even to hear of any; but under the guidance of our new traveling companions, Shamárin and Peterson, we discovered three: namely, first, Madam Dubróva, wife of a Siberian missionary whose anthropological researches among the Buriáts have recently attracted to him some attention; secondly, a young medical student named Urúsof, who, by permission of Governor Pedashénko, was serving as an assistant in the city hospital; and, thirdly, a lady who had been taken to that hospital to recover from injuries that she had received in an assault made upon her by a drunken soldier. The only one of these exiles whose personal acquaintance we made was Madam Dubróva, who, in 1880, before her marriage, was exiled to Eastern Si-

[1] This natural history of a Russian "project" is not imaginary nor conjectural. A plan for the transportation of exiles in wagons between Tomsk and Irkútsk has been gyrating in circles in the Sargasso Sea of Russian bureaucracy for almost thirty years. The projected reform of the exile system has been the rounds of the various circumlocution offices at least half a dozen times since 1871, and has four times reached the "commission" stage and been reported to the Council of the Empire. (The commissions were under the presidency respectively of Sollohub, Frisch, Zubóf, and Grot. See *Eastern Review*, No. 17, July 22, St. Petersburg, 1882.) Mr. Kokóftsef, assistant chief of the Russian prison department, announced, in a speech that he made to the International Prison Congress at Stockholm in 1878, that his Government recognized the evils of the exile system and was about to abolish it. (See "Report of the International Prison Congress of Stockholm," by E. C. Wines, United States Commissioner, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1879.) That was thirteen years ago, and my latest Russian newspapers contain the information that the "project" for the reform of the exile system has been found "unsatisfactory" by the Council of the Empire, and has been sent back through the Ministry of the Interior to the chief of the prison department for "modification." In other words, this "project" in the course of thirteen years has progressed four stages backward on the return gyration.

beria for making an attempt, in connection with Madam Róssikova, to rob the Khersón Government Treasury. After the adoption of the so-called "policy of terror" by the extreme section of the Russian revolutionary party in 1878, some of the terrorists advocated and practised a resort to such methods of waging war as the forgery of Imperial manifestos as a means of inciting the peasants to revolt, and the robbery of Government mails and Government treasuries as a means of procuring money to relieve the sufferings and to facilitate the escape of political exiles in Siberia. These measures were disapproved and condemned by all of the Russian liberals and by most of the cool-headed revolutionists; but they were defended by those who resorted to them upon the ground that they [the terrorists] were fighting against tremendous odds, and that the unjust, treacherous, and ferociously cruel treatment of political prisoners by the Government was enough to justify any sort of reprisals. Among the terrorists of this class was Madam Dubróva, or, as she was known before her marriage, Miss Anna Alexéiova. In conjunction with Madam Róssikova, a school-teacher from Elizabethgrad, and aided by an escaped convict from Siberia, Miss Alexéiova made an attempt to rob the Khersón Government Treasury by means of a tunnel driven secretly at night under the stone floor of the vault in which the funds of the institution were kept. Judged from any point of view this was a wild scheme for young and criminally inexperienced gentlewomen to undertake; and that it ever succeeded at all is a striking evidence of the skill, the energy, the patience, and the extraordinary daring that were developed in certain classes of Russian society at that time by the conditions of revolutionary life. Young, refined, and educated women, in all parts of the Empire, entered upon lines of action, and devised and executed plots that, in view of the inevitable consequences, might well have daunted the bravest man. The tunnel under the Khersón Government

Treasury was successfully driven without detection, entrance to the vault was obtained by removing one of the heavy stone slabs in the floor, and the young women carried away and concealed a million and a half of *rúbles* in available cash. Before they could remove the stolen money to a place of perfect safety, however, and make good their own escape, they were arrested, together with their confederate, the runaway convict, and thrown into prison. The confederate turned state's evidence and showed the police where to find the stolen money, and the amateur burglars were sent to Siberia. Madam Róssikova, as the older woman and the originator of the plot, was condemned to penal servitude at the mines, while Miss Alexéiova was sentenced merely to forced colonization with deprivation of certain civil rights. After her marriage in Siberia to the missionary Dubróf, she was permitted to reside, under police supervision, in Krasnoyársk.

I had seen in Siberia, long before my arrival at Krasnoyársk, almost every variety of political offender from the shy and timid school-girl of sixteen to the hardened and embittered terrorist; but I had never before happened to make the acquaintance of a political treasury robber, and when Mr. Shamárin proposed to take me to call upon Madam Dubróva, I looked forward to the experience with a good deal of curiosity. She had been described to me by Colonel Nóvikof, in Chíta, as nothing more than a common burglar who had assumed the mask of a political offender with the hope of getting a lighter sentence; but as Colonel Nóvikof was both ignorant and prejudiced, and as, moreover, pretending to be a political with a view to getting a lighter sentence for burglary would be very much like pleading guilty to murder in the hope of getting a lighter sentence for simple trespass, I did not place much confidence in his statements.[1]

[1] Colonel Nóvikof sat as one of the judges in the court-martial that tried Madam Róssikova and Miss Alexéiova, but he was either incapable of understanding the characters of such women or he was trying to deceive me

Shamárin, Peterson, and I went to see Madam Dubróva the night after our arrival in Krasnoyársk, and found her living in one half of a very plainly furnished house in a respectable but not fashionable part of the town, about half a mile from our hotel. She was a lady perhaps thirty years of age, with dark hair, large dark eyes, regular features, clear complexion, and a frank, pleasant manner. Ten years earlier she must have been a very attractive if not a beautiful young girl; but imprisonment, exile, disappointment, and suffering had left unmistakable traces in her face. She greeted us cordially, expressed particular pleasure at meeting a traveler from the United States, regretted that her husband was absent from home, and began at once to question me about the political situation in Russia, and to make inquiries concerning certain of her exiled friends whom I had met in other parts of Eastern Siberia. A general conversation followed, in the course of which I had an opportunity to form a hasty but fairly satisfactory judgment with regard to her character. It was in almost all respects a favorable judgment. No one that was not hopelessly blinded by political hatred and prejudice could fail to see that this was a type of woman as far removed from "common burglars and thieves" as Charlotte Corday was removed from common murderers. You might possibly describe her as misguided, fanatical, lacking in sound judgment, or lawless; but you could class her with common criminals only by ignoring all the characteristics that distinguish a man like John Brown, for example, from a com-

when he described them to me as "nothing but common burglars and thieves." Madam Róssikova was represented to me by all the political exiles who knew her as a woman of high moral standards and self-sacrificing life. She was one of the young women who took part in the quixotic but generous movement known as "going to the people," and lived for seven or eight months like a common peasant woman in a peasant village merely in order to see how that class of the people could best be reached and helped. As a revolutionary propagandist she was very successful, particularly among the Stúndists or Russian Baptists. She opposed terrorism for a long time, but finally became a terrorist herself under the influence of letters from her exiled friends in Siberia describing their sufferings.

mon brigand. The law may deal primarily with actions, and pay little attention to motives, but in estimating character from the historical point of view motives must be taken fully into account. Madam Dubróva was arrested the first time — before she was eighteen years of age — for going with Madam Róssikova into a peasant village on an errand that was as purely and generously philanthropic as that of the educated young women from New England who went South during the reconstruction era to teach in negro schools. From that time forward she was regarded as a political suspect, and was harried and harassed by the authorities, and exasperated by unjust treatment of herself and her friends until, under the dominating influence of Madam Róssikova — a character of the true John Brown type — she became a terrorist. Like many other young Russians of ardent nature and imperfect acquaintance with the history of man's social and political experiments, she acted sometimes upon erroneous conceptions of duty or mistaken ideas of moral justification; but for this again the Russian Government itself is responsible. Upon the pretense of guarding the moral character of its young people and shielding them from the contagion of "seditious" ideas, it deprives them of the knowledge that is necessary to guide them in dealing with the problems of life, sets them an example of lawlessness by punishing them for social activity that is perfectly innocent and legal, and then, having exasperated them into crime by injustice and cruelty, holds them up to the world as monsters of depravity. I have been accused by Russian officials of idealizing the characters of the political exiles; but when the history of the latter half of the nineteenth century shall have been written, it will be found, I think, that my portraits of the Russian revolutionists, necessarily imperfect and sketchy as they must be, are much more like the originals than are the caricatures of human beings left on record by the prosecuting attorneys of the Crown in their political speeches and indictments.

On the second day after our arrival in Krasnoyársk we narrowly escaped getting into what might have been serious trouble as the result of an unexpected perquisition in the house of the acquaintance with whom Shamárin and Peterson were staying. This acquaintance, it seemed, was under suspicion, and late in the evening, during the absence of the two young men from their quarters, the police suddenly appeared with orders to make a house-search. The search was duly made, but nothing of a suspicious nature was found except the two locked trunks of Shamárin and Peterson. In reply to a question as to what was in them the proprietor of the house said that he did not know, that they were the property of two of his acquaintances who had stopped for a few days with him on their way from Irkútsk to St. Petersburg. Upon being asked where these acquaintances were, he replied that he did not know, that they usually went out after dinner and returned between eleven and twelve o'clock. After a brief consultation the police officers decided that as they had no orders to search the personal baggage of the house-owner's guests they would not force the locks of the trunks, but would merely cord and seal them so that the contents could not be tampered with, and leave them until morning.

When Shamárin and Peterson returned to their quarters about midnight they found their trunks corded and sealed so that they could not be opened. In one of them were many letters from political exiles and convicts in Eastern Siberia to friends and relatives in European Russia—letters describing my investigations and the nature of the material that I was collecting, and asking the friends and relatives in European Russia to coöperate with me—and a photograph of myself that I had given to Shamárin with a dedication or inscription on the back that would reveal to any intelligent police officer the intimate nature of my relations with political convicts. What was to be done? To break a police seal under such circumstances would be a

penal offense and would probably lead to imprisonment and an investigation. To leave the letters and photograph in the trunk would be to insure their discovery and confiscation on the following morning, and that might create a very embarrassing situation for me, as well as for the authors of the letters and their friends. The two young men finally concluded to make an attempt to get the trunk open without removing the cords or breaking the seals, and as the letters and photograph were near the bottom, and as the lid could not be raised even if the trunk were unlocked, they decided to take out a part of the bottom and afterward replace it. By working all the rest of the night they succeeded in getting out one of the bottom boards, obtained the dangerous letters and the photograph, put the board back without disturbing any of the seals, and when the police came in the morning stood by with unruffled serenity and saw the trunk searched. Of course nothing more dangerous than a hair-brush, and nothing more incriminating than a hotel-bill could be found.

There was another little episode at Krasnoyársk which gave us some uneasiness, and that was the offensive behavior of two unknown men towards us one night in a bookstore. The reader will perhaps remember the mysterious pistol-shot that was fired through the partition of our room late one night in Chíta. That incident first suggested to me the possibility of becoming accidentally involved in some sort of affray or mystery that would give the police a plausible excuse for taking us temporarily into custody and making an examination of our baggage. I knew that, on account of the nature of the papers and documents that I had in my possession, such a search would be absolutely fatal, and I resolved to be extremely careful not to fall into any snare of that kind should it be set for me. I even refrained, on one occasion, from going to the aid of a woman who was being cruelly and brutally beaten late at night in the other half of a house where I was call-

ing upon a political convict. I felt sure that her screams would soon bring the police, and I not only did not dare to be found by them in that place, but I did not dare to be connected with an affair that would lead to a police investigation. But it was very hard to hear that woman's screams and not to go to her relief.

The Krasnoyársk incident to which I refer was as follows:

Frost and I early one evening went into the principal bookstore of Krasnoyársk to buy some provincial maps, writing-materials, note-books, and other things of that kind which we happened to need. We were followed into the house by two men in plain citizen's dress whom I had never before seen, and to whom at first I paid little attention. In a few moments, however, I discovered that one of them had attached himself to me and the other to Mr. Frost, and that they were mimicking or caricaturing, in a very offensive way, everything that we did. They were not intoxicated, they did not address any of their remarks to us; in fact they did not make any original remarks at all. They simply mimicked us. If I asked to see a map of the province of Yeniséisk, the man by my side also asked to see a map of the province of Yeniséisk, and did so with an elaborate imitation of my manner. If I went to another part of the store and expressed a desire for writing-paper, he went to the same part of the store and also expressed a desire for writing-paper. The intention to be offensive was so unmistakable, and the manifestation of it so extraordinary and deliberate, that I at once suspected some sort of police trap. No two sane and sober private citizens would follow perfect strangers into a bookstore and behave towards them in this studied and evidently preconcerted manner without some definite object. I could imagine no other object than the provocation of a fight, and as I could not afford just at that time to engage in a fight, there was nothing left for me to do but to transact my business as speedily as possible and to get out of the

store. The men followed us to the sidewalk, but did not speak to us, and we lost sight of them in the darkness. When I asked the proprietor of the store the next day if he

SCENERY OF THE UPPER YENISÉI.

knew the men he replied that he did not. In view of the mass of documents, letters, and politically incendiary material of all sorts that we had concealed about our persons and in our baggage, and in view of the tremendous interests that we had at stake generally, such episodes as these,

whatever their significance may have been, were very disquieting. Long before I reached the frontier of European Russia I became so nervous, and so suspicious of everything unusual, that I could hardly sleep at night.

Wednesday, January 20th, having spent as much time in Krasnoyársk as we thought we could spend there profitably, and having recovered from the fatigue of the journey from Irkútsk, we set out for the town of Minusínsk, which is situated on the northern watershed of the Altái and Sayán mountains, near the Mongolian frontier, in what is half seriously and half jocosely called "The Siberian Italy." The distance from Krasnoyársk to Minusínsk is about two hundred miles, and the road between the two places in winter runs on the ice up the great river Yeniséi. It is not a regular post-route, but the well-to-do and enterprising peasants who live along the river are accustomed to carry travelers from village to village at the established Government post-rate, and there is no more delay than on the great Siberian road itself. The weather, when we left Krasnoyársk, was cold and stormy, and the snow was drifting so badly on the ice that beyond the second station it became necessary to harness the three horses tandem and to send a fourth horse ahead with a light sledge to break a track. As the road was perfectly level, and the motion of the *pavóska* steady, Frost and I buried ourselves in the depths of our sheepskin bag as night came on and went to sleep, leaving our drivers to their own devices. All that I remember of the night's travel is waking up and getting out of the *pavóska* at intervals of three or four hours and going into some peasant's house to wait for the harnessing of fresh horses. Thursday we traveled slowly all day up the river through deep soft snow in which the *pavóska* sank to its outriggers and the horses to their knees. The banks of the river became higher as we went southward, and finally assumed a wild mountainous character, with splendid ramparts here and there of cliffs and stratified pali-

sades. Upon these cliffs Mr. Sávenkof, the accomplished director of the Normal School in Krasnoyársk, found the remarkable inscriptions and pictographs of which he has so large a collection. There are many evidences to show that the basin of the Yeniséi

MOUNTAINS AND PALISADES OF THE YENISÉI.

was the home of a great and prosperous nation. On Friday, after leaving the seventh station from Krasnoyársk, we abandoned the river for a time and rode through a shallow, grassy, and almost snowless valley which was literally a great cemetery. In every direction it was dotted with innumerable gravestones, inclosing burial-mounds like those shown in the illustration

on page 396. It is not an exaggeration, I think, to say that there were thousands of them, and throughout the whole day they were the most prominent features of every landscape.

Before daylight, Saturday morning, January 23d, we reached our proximate destination, the town of Minusínsk, and found shelter in a two-story log house that for many years was the home of the distinguished political exile, Prince Alexander Kropótkin.

CHAPTER XII

OUR LAST DAYS IN SIBERIA

MINUSÍNSK, where we made our last stop in Eastern Siberia, is a thriving little town of 5000 or 6000 inhabitants, situated in the fertile valley of the upper Yeniséi, 3200 miles from the capital of the Empire and 150 miles from the boundary-line of Mongolia. It corresponds very nearly with Liverpool in latitude and with Calcutta in longitude, and is distant from St. Petersburg, in traveling time, about twenty days. Owing to the fact that it lies far south of the main line of transcontinental communication it has not often been visited by foreign travelers, and at the time of our visit was little known even to the people of European Russia; but it had particular interest for us, partly because it contained the largest and most important museum of archæology and natural history in Siberia, and partly because it was the place of exile of a number of prominent Russian liberals and revolutionists.

We reached the little town about half-past five o'clock in the morning. The columns of smoke that were rising here and there from the chimneys of the log houses showed that some, at least, of the inhabitants were already astir; but as the close-fitting board shutters had not been taken down from the windows there were no lights visible, the wide streets were empty, and the whole town had the lonely, deserted appearance that most Siberian towns have when seen early in the morning by the faint light of a waning moon.

"Where do you order me to go?" inquired our driver, reining in his horses and turning half around in his seat.

"To a hotel," I said. "There 's a hotel here, is n't there?"

"There used to be," he replied, doubtfully. "Whether there 's one now or not, God knows; but if your high nobility has no friends to go to, we 'll see."

We were provided with letters of introduction to several well-known citizens of Minusínsk, and I had no doubt that at the house of any one of them we should be cordially and hospitably received; but it is rather awkward and embarrassing to have to present a letter of introduction, before daylight in the morning, to a gentleman whom you have just dragged out of bed; and I resolved that, if we should fail to find a hotel, I would have the driver take us to the Government post-station. We had no legal right to claim shelter there, because we were traveling with "free" horses and without a *padarózhnaya;* but experience had taught me that a Siberian post-station master, for a suitable consideration, will shut his eyes to the strictly legal aspect of any case and admit the justice and propriety of any claim.

After turning three or four corners our driver stopped in front of a large two-story log building, near the center of the town, which he said "used to be" a hotel. He pounded and banged at an inner courtyard door until he had roused all the dogs in the neighborhood, and was then informed by a sleepy and exasperated servant that this was not a hotel but a private house, and that if we continued to batter down people's doors in that way in the middle of the night we should n't need a hotel, because we would be conducted by the police to suitable apartments in a commodious jail. This was not very encouraging, but our driver, after exchanging a few back-handed compliments with the ill-tempered servant, took us to another house in a different part of the town, where he banged and pounded at another door with undiminished vigor and resolution. The man who responded on this occasion said that he did keep

"rooms for arrivers," but that, unfortunately, the full complement of "arrivers" had already arrived, and his rooms were all occupied. He suggested that we try the house of one Soldátof. As there seemed to be nothing better to do, away we went to Soldátof's, where at last, in the second story of an old weather-beaten log building, we found a large, well-lighted, and apparently clean room which was offered to us, with board for two, at seventy cents a day. We accepted the terms with joy, and ordered our driver to empty the *pavóska* and bring up the baggage. Our newly found room was uncarpeted, had no window-curtains, and contained neither wash-stand nor bed; but it made up for its deficiencies in these respects by offering for our contemplation an aged oleander in a green tub, two pots of geraniums, and a somewhat anemic vine of English ivy climbing feebly up a cotton string to look at itself in a small wavy mirror. Of course no reasonable traveler would complain of the absence of a bed when he could sit up all night and look at an oleander; and as for the washstand—it would have been wholly superfluous in a hotel where you could go out to the barn at any time and get one of the hostlers to come in and pour water on your hands out of a gangrened brass teapot.

As soon as our baggage had been brought in we lay down on the floor, just as we were, in fur caps, sheepskin overcoats, and felt boots, and slept soundly until after ten o'clock.

A little before noon, having changed our dress and made ourselves as presentable as possible, we went out to make a call or two and to take a look at the place. We did not think it prudent to present our letters of introduction to the political exiles until we could ascertain the nature of the relations that existed between them and the other citizens of the town, and could learn something definite with regard to the character and disposition of the *isprávnik*, or district chief of police. We therefore went to call first upon the well-known Siberian naturalist, Mr. N. M. Martiánof,

the founder of the Minusínsk museum, to whom we had a note of introduction from the editor of the St. Petersburg *Eastern Review*. We found Mr. Martiánof busily engaged in compounding medicines in the little drug-store of which he was the proprietor, not far from the Soldátof hotel. He gave us a hearty welcome, and said that he had seen references to our movements occasionally in the Tomsk and

A STREET IN MINUSÍNSK.
(From our window at Soldátof's.)

Irkútsk newspapers, but that he had feared we would return to St. Petersburg without paying Minusínsk a visit. We replied, of course, that we could not think of leaving Siberia until we had seen the Minusínsk museum, and made the acquaintance of the man whose name was so intimately and so honorably associated with it, and with the history of natural science in that remote part of the Empire. In Tomsk, in Krasnoyársk, in Irkútsk, and even in St. Petersburg, we had heard the most favorable accounts of the museum, and we anticipated great pleasure in go-

ing through it, and especially in examining its anthropological and archæological collections, which, we had been informed, were very rich.

Mr. Martiánof seemed gratified to know that we had heard the museum well spoken of in other parts of the Empire, but said, modestly, that it might disappoint travelers who were acquainted with the great scientific collections of America and Europe, and that he hoped we would make due allowance for the difficulties with which they had to contend and the scantiness of their pecuniary resources. It was, as yet, he said, only the kernel or nucleus of a museum, and its chief importance lay in the promise that it held out of becoming something better and more complete in the future. Still, such as it was, we should see it; and if we were at leisure he would take us to it at once. We replied that we had nothing better to do, and in five minutes we were on our way to the museum building.

The Minusínsk museum, of which all educated Siberians are now deservedly proud, is a striking illustration of the results that may be attained by unswerving devotion to a single purpose, and steady, persistent work for its accomplishment. It is, in every sense of the word, the creation of Mr. Martiánof, and it represents, almost exclusively, his own individual skill and labor. When he emigrated to Siberia, in 1874, there was not a public institution of the kind, so far as I know, in all the country, except the half-dead, half-alive mining museum in Barnaül; and the idea of promoting popular education and cultivating a taste for science by making and exhibiting classified collections of plants, minerals, and archæological relics had hardly suggested itself even to teachers by profession. Mr. Martiánof, who was a graduate of the Kazán university, and whose scientific specialty was botany, began, almost as soon as he reached Minusínsk, to make collections with a view to the ultimate establishment of a museum. He was not a man of means or leisure. On the contrary, he was wholly de-

pendent upon his little drug-store for support, and was closely confined to it during the greater part of every day. By denying himself sleep, however, and rising very early in the morning, he managed to get a few hours every day for scientific work, and in those few hours he made a dozen or more identical collections of such plants and minerals as could be found within an hour's walk of the town. After classifying and labeling the specimens carefully, he sent one of these collections to every country school-teacher in the Minusínsk district, with a request that the scholars be asked to make similar collections in the regions accessible to them, and that the specimens thus obtained be sent to him for use in the projected museum. The teachers and scholars responded promptly and sympathetically to the appeal thus made, and in a few months collections of flowers and rocks began to pour into Mr. Martiánof's little drug-store from all parts of the district. Much of this material, of course, had been collected without adequate knowledge or discrimination, and was practically worthless; but some of it was of great value, and even the unavailable specimens were proofs of sympathetic interest and readiness to coöperate on the part not only of the scholars, but of their relatives and friends. In the mean time Mr. Martiánof had been sending similar but larger and more complete collections to the Imperial Academy of Sciences, to various Russian museums, to his own alma mater, and to the professors of natural history in several of the great Russian universities, with a proposition in every case to exchange them for such duplicates of specimens from other parts of the Empire as they might have to spare. In this way, by dint of unwearied personal industry, Mr. Martiánof gathered, in the course of two years, a collection of about 1500 objects, chiefly in the field of natural history, and a small but valuable library of 100 or more scientific books, many of which were not to be found elsewhere in Siberia. In 1876 he made a formal presentation of all this material to the Minusínsk town council

for the benefit of the public. A charter was then obtained; two rooms in one of the school-buildings were set apart as a place for the exhibition of the specimens, and the museum was thrown open. From that time forth its growth was steady and rapid. The cultivated people of Minusínsk rallied to Mr. Martiánof's support, and contributions in the shape of books, anthropological material, educational appliances, and money soon began to come from all parts of the town and district, as well as from many places in the neighboring provinces.

In 1879, only three years after its foundation, the museum contained more than 6000 objects, and on the shelves of the library connected with it there were 3100 volumes. At the time of our visit it had outgrown its accommodations in the school-house, and had been removed to the building of the town council, where it occupied six or seven rooms and was still very much crowded. Its contents were classified in six departments, or sections, known respectively as the departments of natural history, ethnology, archæology, rural economy [including farm and household implements and utensils], technology, and educational appliances. The department of natural history, which comprised the plants, rocks, and animals of the district, was the largest, of course, and the most complete; but to me the department of archæology was by far the most important and interesting, for the reason that it contained a very remarkable collection of weapons and implements found in the *kurgáns* and burial-mounds of the Yeniséi valley, and extending in an unbroken series from the flint arrow-heads and stone celts of the prehistoric aborigines, down through the copper and bronze age, to the rusty pikeheads and chain-mail shirts of the Cossack invaders. There were nearly 4000 specimens in this department, and the group that included the pure copper and bronze articles was extremely varied and interesting. Among the things that particularly attracted my attention, and that I still remember, were axes of pure cop-

per made in the form of preëxisting nephrite celts, and evidently, in pattern, a development from them; axes of pure copper that had partially returned to the form of ore and that looked as if they were composed of metal blended with a substance like malachite; pure-copper knives or daggers with traces of an ornamental pattern in vitreous enamel on the handles, which showed that, in this part of Siberia, the art of enameling preceded even the early acquired art of making bronze; three-tined table-forks; hinged molds of bronze in which, apparently, axes had been cast; a bronze trolling fish-hook and spoon; a bronze pot-lid with the figure of an elephant on it for a handle; earthen jars molded in the form of earlier skin bottles; gypsum death-masks found on the skulls of skeletons in the burial-mounds; and, finally, a quantity of inscriptions, on stone slabs, in characters that seemed to me to resemble the Scandinavian runes.[1] In the department of ethnology the life of the aborigines of Siberia, on its material side, was illustrated very fully by six or eight hundred tools, implements, weapons, utensils, and articles of dress, and there was also an interesting collection of objects made and used by a wild, isolated, and almost unknown tribe known as the Soyóts, who live a nomadic life in the rugged mountainous region of the upper Yeniséi in northern Mongolia. Among these Soyót objects I was surprised to find a big rudely fashioned jewsharp—an instrument that I had never seen in Russia—a set of strange-looking chessmen in which the bishops were double-humped Bactrian camels and the pawns were dogs or wolves, and a set of wooden dice and chips used in playing a game that, as nearly as I could find out, was a Mongolian variety of backgammon. Mr. Martiánof had just been describing the Soyóts to me as the wildest,

[1] According to Professor Aspelin, the state archæologist of Finland, who since my return from Siberia has visited Minusínsk, these inscriptions are in the earliest known form of the Finno-Ugrian language, and date back to a period very remote — as remote, probably, as 2000 B.C. In his opinion the people of the Minusínsk bronze age were of the Finno-Ugrian stock.

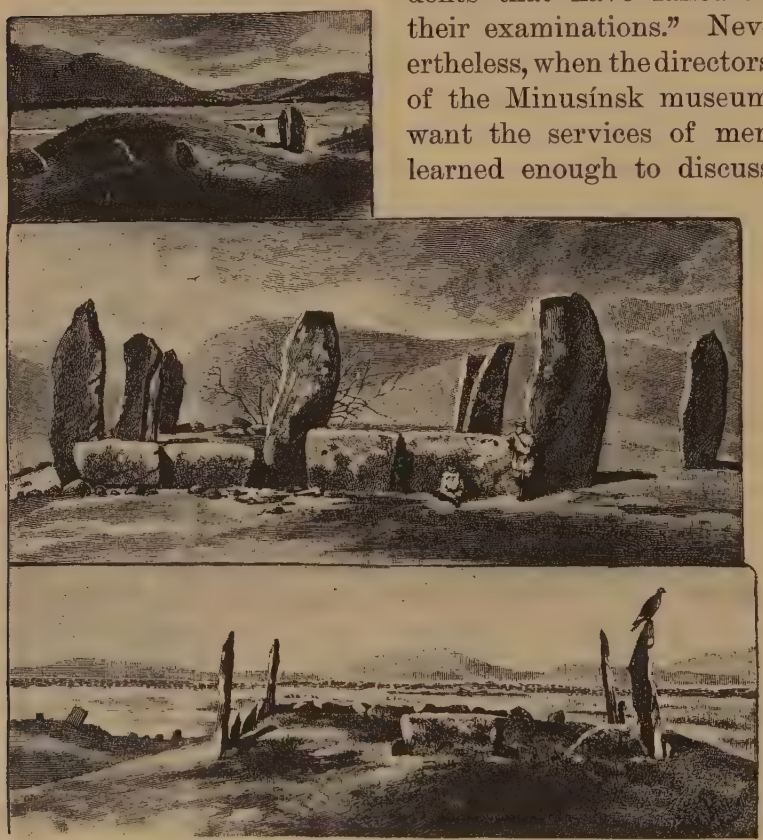
fiercest, most savage native tribe in all northern Mongolia; but after I discovered that they understood the value of doublets in backgammon, knew how to checkmate in three moves with a two-humped Bactrian camel, and could play sweet Mongolian æolian airs on the identical jewsharp of my boyhood, I felt as if I had suddenly discovered a long lost tribe of Asiatic cousins. It was of no use, after that, to try to impress me with the Soyóts' wildness and ferocity. Any tribe that could throw dice, play the Mongolian jewsharp, and open a game of chess with the khan's double-humped - Bactrian - camel's dog gambit was high enough in the scale of civilization to teach social accomplishments even to the Siberians. It is true that the Soyóts last year lay in wait for and captured the distinguished Finnish archæologist Professor Aspelin, and held him for some time a prisoner; but they may have done this merely as a means of getting him to teach them some new jewsharp music, instruct them in Finnish backgammon, or show them the latest method of cornering a king with two camels and a dog. A tribe that lives strictly according to Hoyle ought not to be called savage merely because it makes game of an archæologist and acquires its science by means of an ambuscade. Noticing the interest with which I regarded the objects of Soyót and Tatár origin, Mr. Martiánof said that there was a tribe of Tatárs known as the Káchintsi living within a short distance of Minusínsk, that they were believed to be ethnologically second cousins of the Soyóts,

A SOYÓT.

and that, if we desired it, an excursion to one of their villages might easily be arranged. I replied that we should be very glad to make such an excursion, and it was decided at once that we should go on the following day to the Akúnefski *ulús*, a settlement of Káchinski Tatárs about fifteen *versts* from Minusínsk on the river Abakán.

After making a comprehensive but rather hasty survey of the whole museum, Mr. Frost and I decided that the departments of archæology and ethnology were its most striking and interesting features, but that it was a very creditable exhibition throughout, and an honor to its founder and to the town. Its collections, at the time of our visit, filled seven rooms in the building of the town council, and were numbered up to 23,859 in the catalogue, while the number of volumes in its library was nearly 10,000. All this was the direct result of the efforts of a single individual, who had, at first, very little public sympathy or encouragement, who was almost destitute of pecuniary means, and who was confined ten or twelve hours every day in a drug-store. Since my return from Siberia the directors of the museum, with the aid of I. M. Sibíriakóf, Inokénti Kuznetsóf, and a few other wealthy and cultivated Siberians, have published an excellent descriptive catalogue of the archæological collection, with an atlas of lithographic illustrations, and have erected a spacious building for the accommodation of the museum and library at a cost of 12,000 or 15,000 *rúbles*. The catalogue and atlas, which have elicited flattering comments from archæological societies in the various capitals of Europe, possess an added interest for the reason that they are wholly the work of political exiles. The descriptive text, which fills nearly 200 octavo pages, is from the pen of the accomplished geologist and archæologist Dmítri Kléments, who was banished to Eastern Siberia for "political untrustworthiness" in 1881, while the illustrations for the atlas were drawn by the exiled artist A. V. Stankévich. It has been said again and again by defenders

of the Russian Government that the so-called nihilists whom that Government banishes to Siberia are nothing but *malchíshki* [contemptible striplings], "expelled seminarists," "half-educated school-boys," "despicable Jews," and "students that have failed in their examinations." Nevertheless, when the directors of the Minusínsk museum want the services of men learned enough to discuss



PREHISTORIC BURIAL-PLACES IN THE VALLEY OF THE YENISÉI.

the most difficult problems of archæology, and artists skilful enough to draw with minute fidelity the objects found in the burial-mounds, they have to go to these very same nihilists, these "contemptible striplings," and "half-educated school-boys" who are so scornfully referred to in the official newspapers of the capital and in the speeches of the Tsar's procureurs.

Such misrepresentation may for a time influence public opinion abroad, but it no longer deceives anybody in Siberia. Siberians are well aware that if they want integrity, capacity, and intelligence, they must look for these qualities not among the official representatives of the Crown, but among the unfortunate lawyers, doctors, naturalists, authors, newspaper men, statisticians, and political economists who have been exiled to Siberia for political untrustworthiness.

After leaving the museum we called with Mr. Martiánof upon several prominent citizens of the town, among them Mr. Lítkin, the mayor or head of the town council; Dr. Malínin, an intelligent physician, who lived in rather a luxurious house filled with beautiful conservatory flowers, and a wealthy young merchant named Safiánof, who carried on a trade across the Mongolian frontier with the Soyóts, and who was to accompany us on our visit to the Káchinski Tatárs. I also called, alone, upon Mr. Známenski, the *isprávnik*, or district chief of police, but, failing to find him at home, left cards. About the middle of the afternoon we returned to Soldátof's, where we had dinner, and then spent most of the remainder of the day in making up sleep lost on the road.

Our excursion to the *ulús* of the Káchinski Tatárs was made as projected, but did not prove to be as interesting as we had anticipated. Mr. Safiánof came for us in a large comfortable sleigh about nine o'clock in the morning, and we drove up the river, partly on the ice and partly across low extensive islands, to the mouth of the Abakán, and thence over a nearly level steppe, very thinly covered with snow, to the *ulús*. The country generally was low and bare, and would have been perfectly uninteresting but for the immense number of burial-mounds, tumuli, and monolithic slabs that dotted the landscape as far as the eye could reach, and that were unmistakable evidences of the richness of the archæological field in which the bronze-age collections

of the Minusínsk museum had been gathered. Some of the standing monoliths were twelve or fifteen feet in height and three or four feet wide, and must have been brought, with great labor, from a distance. All of these standing stones and tumuli, as well as the bronze implements and utensils found in the graves and plowed up in the fields around Minusínsk, are attributed by the Russian peasants to prehistoric people whom they call the Chúdi, and if you go into almost any farmer's house in the valley of the upper Yeniséi and inquire for "Chúdish things" the children or the housewife will bring you three or four arrow-heads, a bronze implement that looks like one half of a pair of scissors, or a queer copper knife made in the shape of a short boomerang, with the cutting edge on the inner curve like a yataghan.

We reached the Káchinski *ulús* about eleven o'clock. I was disappointed to find that it did not differ essentially from a Russian village or a small settlement of semi-civilized Buriáts. Most of the houses were gable-roofed log buildings of the Russian type, with chimneys, brick ovens, and double glass windows, and the inhabitants looked very much like American Indians that had abandoned their hereditary pursuits and dress, accepted the yoke of civilization, and settled down as petty farmers in the neighborhood of a frontier village or agency. Here and there one might see a *yurt*, whose octagon form and conical bark roof suggested a Kirghis *kibítka*, and indicated that the builders' ancestors had been dwellers in tents; but with this exception there was nothing in or about the settlement to distinguish it from hundreds of Russian villages of the same class and type. Under the guidance of Mr. Safiánof, who was well acquainted with all of these Tatárs, we entered and examined two or three of the low octagonal *yurts* and one of the gable-roofed houses, but found in them little that was of interest. Russian furniture, Russian dishes, Russian trunks, and Russian *samovárs* had taken the places of

A YURT OF THE KÁCHINSKI TATÁRS.

the corresponding native articles, and I could find nothing that seemed to be an expression of Tatár taste, or a survival from the Tatár past, except a child's cradle shaped like a small Eskimo dog-sledge with transverse instead of longi-

tudinal runners, and a primitive domestic still. The latter, which was used to distil an intoxicating liquor known as arrack, consisted of a large copper kettle, mounted on a tripod and furnished with a tight-fitting cover, out of the top of which projected a curving wooden tube intended to serve as a condenser, or worm. The whole apparatus was of the rudest possible construction, and the thin, acrid, unpleasant-looking, and vile-tasting liquor made in it was probably as intoxicating and deadly as the poison-toadstool cordial of the wandering Koráks. The interior of every Tatár habitation that we inspected was so cheerless, gloomy, and dirty that we decided to take our lunch out of doors on the snow; and while we ate it Mr. Safiánof persuaded some of the Tatár women to put on their holiday dresses and let Mr. Frost photograph them. It will be seen from the illustration on page 403 that the Káchinski feminine type is distinctively Indian, and there are suggestions of the Indian even in the dress. All of the Káchinski Tatárs that we saw in the Minusínsk district, if they were dressed in American fashion, would be taken in any Western State for Indians without hesitation or question. They number in all about ten thousand, and are settled, for the most part, on what is known as the Káchinski Steppe, a great rolling plain on the left or western bank of the Yeniséi above Minusínsk, where the climate is temperate and the snowfall light, and where they find excellent pasturage, both in summer and in winter, for their flocks and herds.

Late in the afternoon, when Mr. Frost had made an end of photographing the women of the settlement, all of whom were eager to put on their good clothes and "have their pictures taken," we set out on our return to Minusínsk, and before dark we were refreshing ourselves with caravan tea and discussing Káchinski Tatárs under the shadow of our own vine and oleander in Soldátof's second-story-front bower.

It must not be supposed that we had become so absorbed in museums, archæological relics, and Káchinski Tatárs

that we had forgotten all about the political exiles. Such was by no means the case. To make the acquaintance of these exiles was the chief object of our visit to Minu-

DISTILLING ARRACK IN A TATÁR YURT. (SEE p. 400.)

sínsk, and we did not for a moment lose sight of it; but the situation there just at that time was a peculiarly strained and delicate one, owing to the then recent escape of a political named Máslof, and the strictness with which, as a natural consequence, all the other exiles were watched.

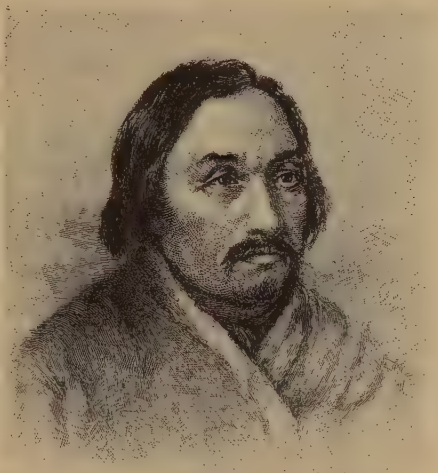
The provincial procureur Skrínikof and a colonel of gendarmes from Krasnoyársk were there making an investigation of the circumstances of Máslof's flight; the local police, of course, were stimulated to unwonted vigilance by the result of their previous negligence and by the presence of these high officers of the Crown from the provincial capital; and it was extremely difficult for us to open communication with the politicals without the authorities' knowledge. In these circumstances it seemed to me necessary to proceed with great caution, and to make the acquaintance of the exiles in a manner that should appear to be wholly accidental. I soon learned, from Mr. Martiánof, that several of them had taken an active interest in the museum, had been of great assistance in the collection and classification of specimens, and were in the habit of frequenting both the museum and the library. I should have been very dull and slow-witted if, in the light of this information, I had failed to see that archæology and anthropology were my trump cards, and that the best possible thing for me to do was to cultivate science and take a profound interest in that museum. Fortunately I was a member of the American Geographical Society of New York and of the Anthropological Society of Washington, and had a sufficiently general smattering of natural science to discuss any branch of it with laymen and the police, even if I could not rise to the level of a professional like Martiánof. I therefore not only visited the museum at my earliest convenience, and took a deep anthropological interest in the Káchinski Tatárs, but asked Mr. Martiánof to allow us to take a Soyóte plow, a lot of copper knives and axes, and half a dozen bronze mirrors to our room, where we could study them and make drawings of them at our leisure, and where, of course, they would be seen by any suspicious official who happened to call upon us, and would be taken by him as indications of the perfectly innocent and praiseworthy nature of our aims and pursuits. The result of our

KÁCHINSKI TATÁR WOMAN AND CHILD. (SEE P. 400.)

conspicuous devotion to science was that Mr. Martiánof kept our room filled with archæological relics and ethnological specimens of all sorts, and, moreover, brought to call upon us one evening the accomplished geologist, archæologist, and political exile, Dmítri Kléments. I recognized the latter at once as the man to whom I had a round-robin letter of introduction from a whole colony of political exiles in another part of Eastern Siberia, and also as the original of one of the biographical sketches in Stépniak's "Underground Russia." He was a tall, strongly built man about forty years of age, with a head and face that would attract attention in any popular assembly, but that would be characterized by most observers as Asiatic rather than European in type. The high, bald, well-developed forehead was that of the European scholar and thinker, but the dark-brown eyes, swarthy complexion, prominent cheek-bones, and rather flattish nose with open, dilated nostrils, suggested the features of a Buriát or Mongol. The lips and chin and the outlines of the lower jaw were concealed by a dark-brown beard and mustache; but all the face that could be seen below the forehead might have belonged to a native of any south-Siberian tribe.

As soon as I could get my round-robin certificate of trustworthiness out of the leather money-belt under my shirt, where I carried all dangerous documents likely to be needed on the road, I handed it to Mr. Kléments with the remark that although Mr. Martiánof had given me the conventional introduction of polite society, he could not be expected, of course, as a recent acquaintance, to vouch for my moral character, and I begged leave, therefore, to submit my references. Mr. Kléments read the letter with grave attention, went with it to one corner of the room, struck a match, lighted the paper, held it by one corner between his thumb and forefinger until it was entirely consumed, and then, dropping the ash and grinding it into powder on the floor under his foot, he turned to me and said, "That's the

safest thing to do with all such letters." I was of the same opinion, but I had to carry with me all the time, nevertheless, not only such epistles but documents and letters infinitely more compromising and dangerous. After half an hour's conversation Mr. Martiánof suggested that we all come to his house and drink tea. The suggestion met with general approval, and we spent with Mr. and Mrs. Martiánof the remainder of the evening.



A KÁCHINSKI TATÁR. (SEE P. 398.)

On the following morning we had our first skirmish with the Minusínsk police. Before we were up an officer in a blue uniform forced his way into our room without card or announcement, and in rather an offensive manner demanded our passports. I told him that the passports had been sent to the police-station on the day of our arrival, and had been there ever since.

"If they are there the *nadzirátel* [inspector] does n't know it," said the officer impudently.

"It 's his business to know it," I replied, "and not to send a man around here to disturb us before we are up in the morning. We have been in the Empire long enough to know what to do with passports, and we sent ours to the police-station as soon as we arrived."

My aggressive and irritated manner apparently convinced the officer that there must be some official mistake or oversight in this matter of passports, and he retired in confusion; but in less than ten minutes, while I was still lying on the floor, virtually in bed, around came the in-

spector of police himself—an evil-looking miscreant with a pock-marked face, and green, shifty, feline eyes, who, without his uniform, would have been taken anywhere for a particularly bad type of common convict. He declared that our passports were not at the police-station and had not been there, and that he wanted them immediately. Furthermore, he said, he had been directed by the *isprávnik* to find out "what kind of people" we were, where we had come from, and what our business was in Minusínsk. "You have been making calls," he said, "upon people in the town, and yet the *isprávnik* has n't seen anything of you."

"Whose fault is it that he has n't seen anything of me?" I demanded hotly. "I called on him day before yesterday, did n't find him at home, and left my card. If he wants to know 'what kind of people' we are, why does n't he return my call in a civilized manner, at a proper time of day, instead of sending a police officer around here to make impertinent inquiries before we are up in the morning? As for the 'kind of people' we are—perhaps you will be able to find out from these," and I handed him my open letters from the Russian Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He glanced through them, and then, in a slightly changed tone and manner, inquired, "Will you permit me to take these to show to the *isprávnik?*"

"Certainly," I replied; "that 's what they are for."

He bowed and withdrew, while I went down to see the proprietor of the house and to find out what he had done with the passports. It appeared that they had been taken to the police-station at once, but that the police secretary could neither read them nor make anything out of them, and had stupidly or angrily declined to receive them; whereupon the proprietor had brought them back and put them away safely in a cupboard drawer. In the course of half an hour the inspector of police returned with the open letters, which he handed me without remark. I gave him

the passports with a brief statement of the fact that his secretary had declined to receive them, and we parted with a look of mutual dislike and suspicion. We were destined shortly to meet again under circumstances that would deepen his suspicion and my dislike.

With the coöperation of Mr. Martiánof and Mr. Kléments we made the acquaintance in the course of the next three or four days of nearly all the political exiles in the place, and found among them some of the most interesting and attractive people we as yet had met in Siberia. Among those with whom we became best acquainted were Mr. Ivánchin-Písaref, a landed proprietor from the province of Yároslav; Dr. Martínof, a surgeon from Stávropol; Iván Petróvich Belokónski, a young author and newspaper man from Kiev; Leonídas Zhebunóf, formerly a student in the Kiev university; Miss Zenaïd Zatsépina, and Dmítri Kléments. The wives of Dr. Martínof and Mr. Ivánchin-Písaref were in exile with them; both spoke English, and in their hospitable houses we were so cordially welcomed and were made to feel so perfectly at home that we visited them as often as we dared. Dr. Martínof was a man of wealth and culture, and at the time of his arrest was the owner of a large estate near Stávropol in the Caucasus. When he was banished his property was put into the hands of an administrator appointed by the Minister of the Interior, and he was allowed for his maintenance a mere pittance of fifty dollars a month. He had never had a judicial trial, and had never been deprived legally of any of his civil rights; and yet by order of the Tsar his estate had been taken away from him and he had been banished by administrative process, with his wife and child, to this remote part of Eastern Siberia. He was not allowed at first even to practise his profession; but this the Minister of the Interior finally gave him permission to do. Some time in December, 1885, a few weeks before we reached Minusínsk, a man knocked at Dr. Martinof's door late one night and

said that a peasant who lived in a village not far from the town had been attacked in the forest by a bear, and so terribly mangled and lacerated that it was doubtful whether he could recover. There was no other surgeon in the town, and the messenger begged Dr. Martínof to come to the wounded peasant's assistance. At that late hour of the night it was not practicable to get permission from the police to go outside the limits of the town, and Dr Martínof, thinking that he would return before morning, and that the urgency of the case would excuse a mere technical violation of the rule concerning absence without leave, went with the messenger to the suburban village, set the peasant's broken bones, sewed up his wounds, and saved his life. Early in the morning he returned to Minusínsk, thinking that no one in the town except his wife would be aware of his temporary absence. The *isprávnik*, Známenski, however, heard in some way of the incident, and like the stupid and brutal formalist that he was, made a report to General Pedashénko, the governor of the province, stating that the political exile Martínof had left the town without permission, and asking for instructions. The governor directed that the offender be arrested and imprisoned. Dr. Martínof thereupon wrote to the governor a letter, of which the following is a copy.

Minusínsk, December 3, 1885.

To His Excellency the Governor of the Province of Yeniséisk: On this 3d day of December, 1885, I have been notified of the receipt of an order from your Excellency directing that I be arrested and imprisoned for temporarily leaving the town of Minusínsk without permission. It seems to me to be my duty to explain to your Excellency that I went outside the limits of Minusínsk for the purpose of rendering urgently needed medical assistance to a patient who had been attacked by a bear, and whose life was in extreme danger as the result of deep wounds and broken bones. There is no surgeon in the town except myself to whom application for help in such a case could be made. My services were required immediately, and, in view of the oath taken by me

as a surgeon, I regarded it as my sacred duty to go, the same night I was called, to the place where the injured man lay. I had neither time nor opportunity, therefore, to give the police notice of my contemplated absence. Besides that, in the permission to practise given me by the Minister of the Interior there is nothing to prohibit my going outside the limits of the town to render medical assistance. If, notwithstanding this explanation, your Excellency finds it necessary to hold me to accountability, I beg your Excellency to issue such orders as may be requisite to have me dealt with, not by administrative process, which would be inconsistent with section thirty-two of the Imperially confirmed "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," but by the method indicated in the "Remark" which follows that section, and which provides that a person guilty of unauthorized absence from his assigned place of residence shall be duly tried. In order that such misunderstandings may not occur in future, I beg your Excellency to grant me, upon the basis of section eight of the "Rules Relating to Police Surveillance," permission to go temporarily outside the limits of the town to render medical assistance. SERGE V. MARTÍNOF, M! D.

Governor Pedashénko did not condescend to make any direct reply to this letter, but merely sent the letter itself to the *isprávnik* Známenski with the laconic indorsement, "Let him be tried." Of course an offender in Russia cannot expect to be tried in less than a year after the accusation is made; and up to the time of our departure from Minusínsk the accused in this case was still waiting for arraignment. Since my return to the United States I have been informed by letters from Siberia that five years more have been added to Dr. Martínof's term of exile. Whether this supplementary punishment was inflicted upon him because he dared to save a poor peasant's life without the permission of the *isprávnik*, or merely because his behavior generally was that of a self-respecting Russian nobleman, and not that of a cringing slave, I do not know. When the end of an exile's term of banishment draws near, the local authorities are called upon for a report with regard to his behavior. If the report be unfavorable, an addition of from

one to five years is made to his period of exile. Perhaps the *isprávnik* Známenski reported that Dr. Martínof was "insubordinate"; and very likely he was insubordinate. He certainly had grievances enough to make him so. One peculiarly exasperating thing happened to him almost in my presence. There is an administrative regulation in force in most Siberian penal settlements, requiring political exiles to appear at the police-station daily, semi-weekly, or weekly, and sign their names in a register. The intention, apparently, is to render escapes more difficult by forcing the exile to come, at short intervals, to the local authorities, and say, "I am still here; I have n't escaped." And as a proof that he has n't escaped they make him sign his name in a book. It is a stupid regulation; it affords no security whatever against escapes; it is intensely humiliating to the personal pride of the exile, especially if the authorities happen to be brutal, drunken, or depraved men; and it causes more heartburning and exasperation than any other regulation in the whole exile code.

One morning about a week after our arrival in Minusínsk I was sitting in the house of Ivánchin-Písaref, when the door opened and Dr. Martínof came in. For a moment I hardly recognized him. His eyes had a strained expression, his face was colorless, his lips trembled, and he was evidently struggling with deep and strong emotion.

"What has happened?" cried Mrs. Ivánchin-Písaref, rising as if to go to him.

"The *isprávnik* has ordered Márya [his wife] to come to the police-station," he replied.

For an instant I did not catch the significance of this fact, nor understand why it should so excite him. A few words of explanation, however, made the matter clear. Mrs. Martínof was in hourly expectation of her confinement. I remembered, when I thought of it, that only the night before I had had an engagement to spend the evening at Dr. Martínof's house, and that he had sent me word not

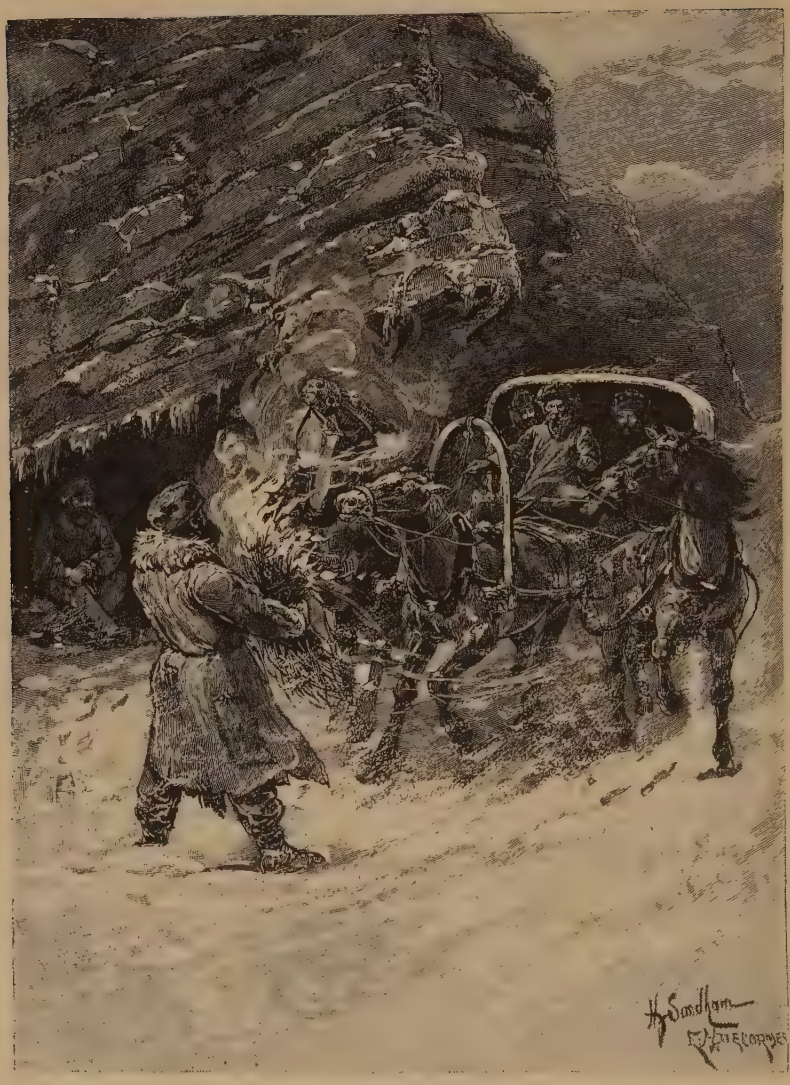
to come because his wife was ill. As it happened to be the day that all of the political exiles were required to sign their names in the police register, Dr. Martínof had gone to the *isprávnik*, explained his wife's condition, said that she was unable to go out, and asked that she be excused. The *isprávnik* made a coarse remark about her, which must have been hard for a husband to bear, but which Dr. Martínof dared not resent, and said that if the woman was not able to walk of course she could not come to the police-station. This was Friday afternoon, and it was on the evening of that day that Dr. Martínof sent word to me not to come to his house on account of his wife's illness. It turned out, however, that her suffering was not decisive, and early the next morning, by her husband's advice, she took a walk of a few moments back and forth in front of the house. The *isprávnik* happened to drive past, and saw her. He went at once to the police-station, and from there sent an officer to her with a curt note, in which he said that if she was able to walk out she was able to come to the police-station, and that if she did not make her appearance within a certain short specified time, he should be compelled to treat her "with all the rigor of the law." The poor woman, therefore, had to choose between the risk, on the one hand, of having her child born at the police-station in the presence of the *isprávnik* and his green-eyed assistant, and the certainty, on the other, of having it born in one of the cells of the Minusínsk prison. If her husband should attempt to defend her, or to resist the officers sent to take her into custody, he would simply be knocked down and thrown into a solitary-confinement cell, and then, perhaps, be separated from her altogether by a sentence of banishment to the arctic region of Yakútsk on the general and elastic charge of "resisting the authorities." The stupid brutality of the *isprávnik's* action in this case was made the more conspicuous by the circumstance that Mrs. Martínof's term of exile would expire by limitation in about two weeks,

and she would then be a free woman. Not only, therefore, was her condition such as to render escape at that time utterly impossible, but there was no imaginable motive for escape. Long before she would recover from her confinement sufficiently to travel she would be free to go where she liked. This made no difference, however, to the *isprávnik*. A certain administrative regulation gave him power to drag to the police-station a delicate, refined, and cultivated woman at the moment when she was about to undergo the great trial of maternity; and drag her to the police-station he did. I think that his action was the result rather of stupidity and senseless formalism than of deliberate malignity. The rules and regulations which control the actions of a petty Russian bureaucrat — as contradistinguished from a human being — require the periodical appearance of every political exile at the police-station. No exception is made by the law in favor of women in childbirth, or women whose term of banishment is about to expire; and the *isprávnik* Známenski acted in the case of the wife just as he had previously acted in the case of the husband — that is, obeyed the rules with a stupid and brutish disregard of all the circumstances.

The two weeks that we spent in Minusínsk were full of interest and adventurous excitement. The *isprávnik* was evidently suspicious of us, notwithstanding our open letters, and did not return our call. The green-eyed inspector of police surprised me one day in the house of the political exile Mr. Ivánchin-Písaref, and doubtless made a report thereupon to his superior officer, and it seemed sometimes as if even science would not save us. I succeeded, however, in establishing pleasant personal relations with the colonel of gendarmes and the Government procureur from Krasnoyársk, told them frankly all about our acquaintance with Kléments, Ivánchin-Písaref, and the other political exiles, as if it was the most natural thing in the world for us to meet them on account of our common interest in archæology,

anthropology, and the museum, and behaved, generally, as if it afforded me the greatest pleasure to tell them—the colonel of gendarmes and the procureur—all that I was doing in Minusínsk, and to share with them all my experiences. What reports were made to St. Petersburg with regard to us I do not know; but they had no evil results. We were not searched and we were not arrested.

Upon the advice of some of my friends in Minusínsk, I decided to get rid of all my note-books, documents, letters from political convicts, and other dangerous and incriminating papers, by sending them through the mails to a friend in St. Petersburg. To intrust such material to the Russian postal department seemed a very hazardous thing to do, but my friends assured me that the postal authorities in Minusínsk were honorable men, who would not betray to the police the fact that I had sent such a package, and that there was little probability of its being opened or examined in St. Petersburg. They thought that the danger of losing my notes and papers in the mails was not nearly so great as the danger of having them taken from me as the result of a police search. The material in question amounted in weight to about forty pounds, but as packages of all sizes are commonly sent by mail in Russia, mere bulk in itself was not a suspicious circumstance. I had a box made by an exiled Polish carpenter, took it to my room at night, put into it the entire results of my Siberian experience,—most of the dangerous papers being already concealed in the covers of books and the hollow sides of small boxes,—sewed it up carefully in strong canvas, sealed it with more than twenty seals, and addressed it to a friend in St. Petersburg whose political trustworthiness was beyond suspicion and whose mail, I believed, would not be tampered with. Thursday morning about half an hour before the semi-weekly post was to leave Minusínsk for St. Petersburg, I carried the box down into the courtyard under the cover of an overcoat, put it into a sleigh, threw a robe over it, and



THE "PLAGUE GUARD."

went with it myself to the post-office. The officials asked no question, but weighed the package, gave me a written receipt for it, and tossed it carelessly upon a pile of other mail matter that a clerk was putting into large leather pouches. I gave one last look at it, and left the post-office

with a heavy heart. From that time forward I was never free from anxiety about it. That package contained all the results of my Siberian work, and its loss would have been simply irreparable. As week after week passed, and I heard nothing about it, I was strongly tempted to telegraph my friend and find out whether it had reached him; but I knew that such a telegram might increase the risk, and I refrained.

On many accounts we were more reluctant to leave Minusínsk than any other town at which we had stopped on our homeward way, but as a distance of 3000 miles still lay between us and St. Petersburg, and as we were anxious to reach European Russia, if possible, before the breaking up of the winter roads, it was time for us to resume our journey. Thursday, February 4th, we made farewell calls upon the political exiles, as well as upon Mr. Martiánof, Mr. Safiánof, and Dr. Malínin, who had been particularly kind to us, and set out with a *tróika* of "free" horses for the city of Tomsk, distant 475 miles. Instead of following the Yeniséi River back to Krasnoyársk, which would have been going far out of our way, we decided to leave it a short distance below Minusínsk and proceed directly to Tomsk by a short cut across the steppes, keeping the great Siberian road on our right all the way. Nothing of interest happened to us until late in the evening, when, just as we were turning up from the river into a small peasant village, the name of which I have now forgotten, both we and our horses were startled by the sudden appearance of a wild-looking man in a long, tattered sheepskin coat, who, from the shelter of a projecting cliff, sprang into the road ahead of us, shouting a hoarse but unintelligible warning, and brandishing in the air an armful of blazing birch-bark and straw.

"What 's the matter?" I said to our driver, as our horses recoiled in affright.

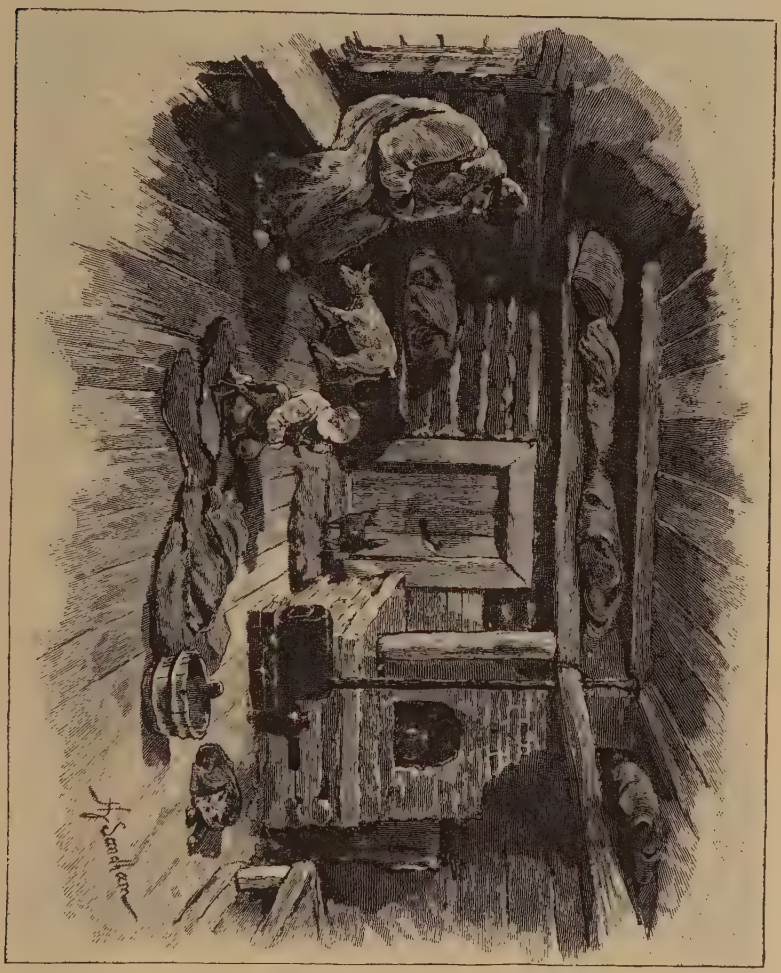
"It 's the plague-guard," he replied. "He says we must be smoked."

The cattle-plague was then prevailing extensively in the

valley of the upper Yeniséi, and it appeared that round this village the peasants had established a sanitary cordon with the hope of protecting their own live stock from contagion. They had heard of the virtues of fumigation, and were subjecting to that process every vehicle that crossed the village limits. The "plague-guard" burned straw, birch-bark, and other inflammable and smoke-producing substances around and under our *pavóska* until we were half strangled and our horses were frantic with fear, and then he told us gravely that we were "purified" and might proceed.

On Friday, the day after our departure from Minusínsk, the weather became cold and blustering. The road after we left the Yeniséi was very bad, and late in the afternoon we were overtaken by a howling arctic gale on a great desolate plain, thirty or forty *versts* west of the Yeniséi and about one hundred and fifty *versts* from Minusínsk. The road was soon hidden by drifts of snow, there were no fences or telegraph-poles to mark its location, we could not proceed faster than a walk, and every three or four hundred yards we had to get out and push, pull, or lift our heavy *pavóska* from a deep soft drift. An hour or two after dark we lost the road altogether, and became involved in a labyrinth of snowdrifts and shallow ravines where we could make little or no progress, and where our tired and dispirited horses finally balked and refused to move. In vain our driver changed them about, harnessed them tandem, coaxed, cursed, and savagely whipped them. They were perfectly well aware that they were off the road, and that nothing was to be gained by floundering about aimlessly the rest of the night on that desert of drifted snow. The driver ejaculated, "Akh Bozhemoi! Bozhemoi!" [O my God! my God!] besought his patron saint to inform him what he had done to deserve such punishment, and finally whimpered and cried like a school-boy in his wrath and discouragement. I suggested at last that he had better leave us there, mount one of the horses, find the road, if

possible, go to the nearest settlement, and then come back after us with lanterns, fresh horses, and men. He acted upon the suggestion, and Frost and I were left alone on



INTERIOR OF A PEASANT'S HOUSE NEAR TOMSK. (SEE P. 418.)

the steppe in our half-capsized *pavóska*, hungry, exhausted, and chilled to the bone, with nothing to do but listen to the howling of the wind and wonder whether our driver in the darkness and in such weather would be able to find a settlement. The long, dismal night wore away at last, the

storm abated a little towards morning, and soon after daybreak our driver made his appearance with ropes, crowbars, three fresh horses, and a stalwart peasant from a neighboring village. They soon extricated us from our difficulties, and early in the forenoon we drove into the little settlement of Ribálskaya, and alighted from our *pavóska* after fourteen hours' exposure to a winter gale on a desolate steppe without sleep, food, or drink. When we had warmed and refreshed ourselves with hot tea in a peasant's cabin, we ate what breakfast we could get, slept two or three hours on a plank bench, and then with fresh horses and a new driver went on our way.

The overland journey in winter from the boundary line of Eastern Siberia to St. Petersburg has often been made and described by English and American travelers, and it does not seem to me necessary to dwell upon its hardships, privations, and petty adventures. We reached Tomsk in a temperature of thirty-five degrees below zero on the fifth day after our departure from Minusínsk, renewed our acquaintance with the Tomsk colony of exiles, gave them the latest news from their friends in the Trans-Baikál and at the mines of Kará, and then continued our journey homeward. On the 22d of February—Washington's birthday—we reached Omsk, stopped there twenty-four hours to rest and celebrate, and then went on by what is known as the "merchants' short cut" to Tobólsk. We were again surprised in the vicinity of Omsk by the appearance of camels. We had of course reconciled our preconceived ideas with the existence of camels in Siberia during the summer, but we had never stopped to think what became of them in the winter, and were very much astonished one frosty moonlight night to see three or four of them drawing Kírghis sledges.

Beyond Omsk we began to meet enormous freight-sledges of a new type drawn by six or eight horses and loaded with goods from the Irbít fair. Some of them were as big as a

KÍRGHIS CAMEL SLEDGES.

cottage gable-roof with a little trough-shaped box perched on the summit for the driver, the merchant, and his clerk. The great annual fair at Irbít in Western Siberia is second in importance only to the world-renowned fair of Nízhni Nóvgorod, and is visited by merchants and traders from

the remotest parts of northern Asia. The freight-sledges that go to it and come from it in immense numbers in the latter part of the winter cut up the roads in the vicinity of Tiumén and Tobólsk so that they become almost impassable on account of deep ruts, hollows, and long, dangerous side-hill slides. We capsized twice in this part of the route notwithstanding the wide spread of our outriggers, and once we were dragged in our overturned *pavóska* down a long, steep hill and badly shaken and bruised before we could extricate ourselves from our sheepskin bag and crawl out. Rest and sleep on such a road were of course almost out of the question, and I soon had reason to feel very anxious about Mr. Frost's health. He was quiet and patient, bore suffering and privation with extraordinary fortitude, and never made the least complaint of anything; but it was evident, nevertheless, that he was slowly breaking down under the combined nervous and physical strain of sleeplessness, jolting, and constant fear of arrest. When we reached Tobólsk on the last day of February, and took off our heavy furs in the little log hotel under the bluff to which we had been recommended, I was shocked at his appearance. How serious his condition was may be inferred from the fact that about midnight that night he crept noiselessly over to the place where I was lying asleep on the floor, pressed his lips closely to my ear, and in a hoarse whisper said, "They are going to murder us!" I was so taken by surprise, and so startled, that I snatched my revolver from under my pillow and had it cocked before I waked sufficiently to grasp the situation, and to realize that Mr. Frost was in a high nervous fever, due chiefly to prolonged sleeplessness, and that the contemplated murder was nothing but an hallucination.

In the course of the next day I made, under the guidance of the chief of police, a very superficial examination of two convict prisons, but did not find much in them that was of interest. I also visited the belfry where now hangs the

first exile to Siberia—the famous bell of Uglích, which was banished to Tobólsk in 1593 by order of the Tsar Bóris Gúdenof for having rung the signal for the insurrec-

MERCHANTS' SLEIGHS COMING FROM THE IRBÍT FAIR. (SEE P. 418.)

tion in Uglích at the time of the assassination of the Crown Prince Dmítri. The exiled bell has been purged of its iniquity, has received ecclesiastical consecration, and now calls the orthodox people of Tobólsk to prayers. The inhabitants of Uglích have recently been trying to recover

their bell upon the plea that it has been sufficiently punished by three centuries of exile for its political untrustworthiness in 1593, and that it ought now to be allowed to return to its home. The mayor of Tobólsk, however, argues that the bell was exiled for life, and that, consequently, its term of banishment has not yet expired. He contends, furthermore, that even admitting the original title of the Uglích people three centuries of adverse possession by the city of Tobólsk have divested the claimants of all their rights, and that the bell should be allowed to remain where it is. The question, it is said, will be carried into the Russian courts.

Late in the afternoon I walked over to the little plateau east of the city where stands the monument erected in honor of Yermák, the conqueror of Siberia, and then, returning to the hotel, paid our bill, ordered post-horses, and proceeded to Tiumén, reaching the latter place on the following day.

A week's rest at Tiumén, with plenty of sleep and good food, and the inspiriting companionship of English-speaking people, so restored Mr. Frost's strength that we were able to start for St. Petersburg by rail Tuesday, March 9th. How delightful it was to move swiftly out of Tiumén in a luxurious railroad car only those can conceive who have traveled eight thousand miles in springless vehicles over Siberian roads.

We reached the Russian capital on the 19th of March, and as soon as I had left Mr. Frost at a hotel with our baggage, I called a *dróshky*, drove to the house of the friend to whom I had sent my precious box of note-books and papers, and, with a fast-beating heart, rang the bell and gave the servant my card. Before my friend made his appearance I was in a perfect fever of excitement and anxiety. Suppose the box had been opened by the post-office or police officials, and its contents seized. What should I have to show for almost a year of work and suffering?

How much could I remember of all that I had seen and heard? What should I do without the written record of

TOBÓLSK—THE UPPER PLATEAU. (SEE P. 422.)

names, dates, and all the multitudinous and minute details that give verisimilitude to a story?

My friend entered the room with as calm and unruffled a countenance as if he had never heard of a box of papers, and my heart sank. I had half expected to be able to see that box in his face. I cannot remember whether

I expressed any pleasure at meeting him, or made any inquiries with regard to his health. For one breathless moment he was to me merely the possible custodian of a box. I think he asked me when I arrived, and remarked that he had some letters for me; but all that I am certain of is that, after struggling with myself for a moment, until I thought I could speak without any manifestation of excitement, I inquired simply, "Did you receive a box from me?"

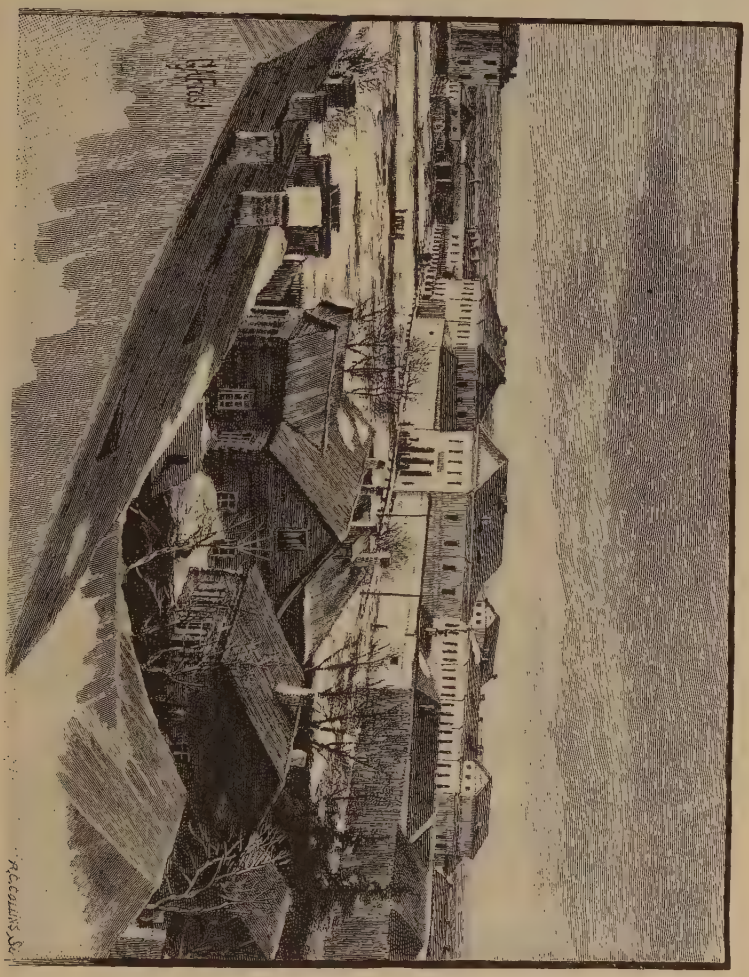
"A box?" he repeated interrogatively. Again my heart sank; evidently he had not received it. "Oh, yes," he continued, as if with a sudden flash of comprehension; "the big square box sewed up in canvas. Yes; that 's here."

I was told afterward that there was no perceptible change in the gloomy March weather of St. Petersburg at that moment, but I am confident, nevertheless, that at least four suns, of the largest size known to astronomy, began immediately to shine into my friend's front windows, and that I could hear robins and meadowlarks singing all up and down the Névski Prospékt.

I forwarded the precious notes and papers to London by a special messenger, in order to avoid the danger of a possible search of my own baggage at the frontier, and then sent our passports to the municipal police with the usual notification that we desired to leave the Empire. The documents were promptly returned to us with a curt verbal message to the effect that we could not leave the Empire "without the permission of the governor-general of Eastern Siberia." As that official was about four thousand miles away, and we could not possibly get the necessary permission from him in less than three months, there was obviously nothing left for us to do but make complaint at the United States legation. I called upon Mr. Wurts, who was then acting as chargé d' affaires, and told him that the police would not allow us to leave the Empire.

"Why not?" he inquired.

"I don't know," I replied. "They say that we must have permission from the governor-general of Eastern Siberia,



THE CONVICT PRISON, TOBÓLSK. (SEE P. 420.)

and of course we can't get that in three months—perhaps not in six months."

Mr. Wurts wrote a polite note to the chief of the bureau of passports in the Foreign Office, asking for information with regard to the alleged refusal of the police to allow two American citizens to leave the Empire. I delivered the

note in person, in order that I might take the bull by the horns and find out definitely what the matter was. The chief of the passport bureau, an Italian whose name I have now forgotten, read the communication attentively, looked scrutinizingly at me, crossed the room and held a whispered consultation with a subordinate, and then returning said: "Mr. Kennan, have you ever had a permit to reside in the Russian Empire before this time?"[1]

"I have," I replied.

"Do you remember when?"

"Yes, in 1868."

"Will you be kind enough to tell me at about what season of the year?"

"It was some time in the spring, and I think in March."

He touched a bell to summon a clerk, and said to the latter, "Find the permit to reside that Mr. George Kennan, an American citizen, took out in March, 1868."

The clerk bowed and withdrew. In three or four minutes he returned bringing the original permit to reside that I had taken out *eighteen years* before, and a printed schedule of twenty or thirty questions concerning myself and my life which I had then answered in writing. The chief examined carefully my earlier record as an officer of the Russian-American Telegraph Company, held another whispered consultation with a subordinate, and then, coming back to me, said, "There are certain informalities, Mr. Kennan, in your present papers that would justify us in keeping you here until we could communicate with the governor-general of Eastern Siberia; but if you will bring me a formal letter from the American Minister, asking that you be allowed to leave the Empire without regard to such informalities, I will give you the necessary permission."

I could not see how a formal letter from the diplomatic

[1] A foreigner is permitted to live six months in Russia upon his own national passport, but after that time he is required to take out a Russian permit to reside. Both Mr. Frost and I had such permits and neither of them had expired.

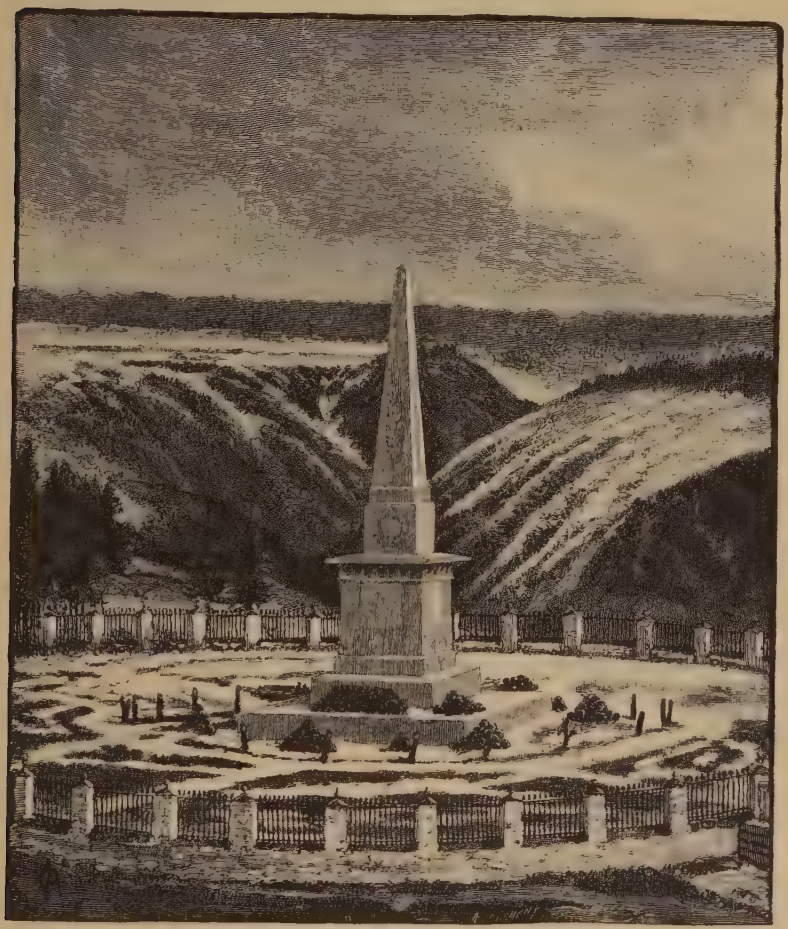
THE EXILED BELL OF UGLÍCH. (SEE P. 421.)

representative of the United States could cure the defects in a Russian document duly issued by authority of the Tsar, and properly stamped, signed, and sealed by the East-Siberian authorities; but I was not in the habit of raising

unnecessary questions in my dealings with the Russian police, and I had good reason, moreover, to say as little as possible about Siberia. I obtained the "formal letter" from Mr. Wurts, brought it to the passport bureau, declared that I was not a Jew, signed my name at the bottom of sundry blanks, disbursed various small sums for stamps, sealing-wax, and paper, paid an official for showing me what to do, received a document which I was directed to take to the police-station of the precinct in which I resided, brought back from there another document addressed to the passport bureau, and finally, after four days of going back and forth from one circumlocution office to another, received a little book, about as big as a religious tract, which certified that there was no objection, on the part of anybody, to my leaving the Empire. Three days later I was in London.

It was my intention merely to write a full report from there to the editor of *The Century Magazine*, and then return to European Russia and continue my investigation; but my companion, Mr. Frost, was taken dangerously ill as a result of the tremendous mental and physical strain of our Siberian experience, and I could not leave him for almost a month. He had borne the extraordinary hardships and privations of our eight-thousand-mile ride through Siberia with heroic fortitude and without a single murmur of complaint; but his strength had given way at last, chiefly as the result of nervous excitement and prolonged insomnia. He recovered slowly, but on the 13th of April he was strong enough to sail for the United States, and on the 16th I took out a new passport and returned with my wife to St. Petersburg. I spent four months in making the acquaintance of Russian liberals, revolutionists, and officials in St. Petersburg, Tver, Moscow, Nízhni Nóvgorod, and Kazán; visited the friends and acquaintances of many of the political exiles whom I had met in Siberia and delivered the letters that I had for them;

called upon Mr. Vlangálli, assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, General Órzhefski, the chief of gendarmes, and Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, the chief of the prison administration;



YERMÁK'S MONUMENT, TOBÓLSK. (SEE P. 422.)

inspected two of the large St. Petersburg prisons—the Litófski Zámok, and the House of Preliminary Detention—completed my investigation, so far as it seemed possible to do so, and finally returned to New York in August, 1886, after an absence of about sixteen months.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CHARACTER OF POLITICAL EXILES.

TO the student of modern Russian history few questions are more important, and none, perhaps, is more interesting, than the question suggested by the title of this chapter—what is the character of the men and women who have been exiled to Siberia for offenses comprehensively but vaguely known in Russia as "political"? Are all of these people alike in their dispositions, their aims, and their methods, or do they differ among themselves in these respects? Are they reasonable, patriotic, liberty-loving citizens, actuated by disinterested motives and provoked into violence only by intolerable oppression and injustice, or are they merely a gang of wrong-headed malcontents, visionary enthusiasts, and fanatical assassins who would be imprisoned or hanged in any civilized state? In short, are the Russian political exiles entitled to our sympathy, or do they deserve our reprobation? It has been my fortune to make the personal acquaintance of more than five hundred members of the anti-Government party[1] in Russia, including not less than three hundred of the so-called nihilists living in exile at the convict mines or in the penal settlements of Siberia. I have formed a definite and well-settled opinion with regard to their character, and

[1] Of course, strictly speaking, there is no such thing in Russia as an "anti-Government party" in the sense of an organized and outspoken "opposition." I use the words merely to designate the whole body of people who secretly favor, or openly work for, the overthrow of the autocracy.

it is my purpose, in this chapter, briefly to state it and give my reasons for it.

There is a widely prevalent impression in western Europe and the United States that the anti-Government party or class in Russia is essentially homogeneous; that its members are all nihilists; that they prefer violence to any other means of redressing wrongs; that they aim simply and solely at the destruction of all existing institutions; and that, in this so-called nihilism, there is something peculiar and mysterious—something that the Western mind cannot fully comprehend owing to its ignorance of the Russian character.[1] This impression seems to me to be a wholly erroneous one. In the first place the anti-Government party in Russia is not, in any sense of the word, homogeneous. Its members belong to all ranks, classes, and conditions of the Russian people; they hold all sorts of opinions with regard to social and political organization; and the methods by which they propose to improve the existing condition of things extend through all possible

[1] The popular view of nihilism is shown in the following quotations, the number of which might be almost indefinitely extended.

"Nihilism, in its largest acceptation,' is the flat negation of all faith and hope, whether in the social, political, or spiritual order." ["The Spell of the Russian Writers," by Harriet W. Preston. *Atlantic Monthly Magazine*, August, 1887, p. 208.]

"Nihilism is an explosive compound generated by the contact of the Sclav character with western ideas." . . . The Nihilists, "like the maniacs of the French Terror, were too keenly alive to existing evils to see any road out of them except by wholesale demolition. A breach with the national past had no terrors to them, because they had broken with it already. Crime was not repulsive, for the landmarks of good and evil had been swept away." ["Russia and the Revolution," by B. F. C. Costelloe. *Macmillan's Magazine*, March, 1882, p. 408.]

"A minority of decided socialists, left to themselves, . . . indulged in the conviction of the necessity of overturning all existing order; of annihilating property, state, church, marriage, society, etc., of placing communism instead of socialism on the throne; and of beginning this great work by the murder of the Tsar. This small but fanatical party were called Nihilists because they would accept absolutely nothing, and only saw happiness in the destruction of everything existing." ["Modern Russia," by Dr. Julius Eckhardt, p. 166.]

Compare the above quotations with the declaration of principles of the Russian revolutionists, and the letter of the terrorist executive committee to Alexander III., which will be found in Appendix C.

gradations, from peaceful remonstrance, in the form of collective petition, to terroristic activity, in the shape of bomb-throwing and assassination. The one common bond that unites them is the feeling, which they all have, that the existing state of affairs has become insupportable and must be changed.

In the second place there is no anti-Government party in Russia to which the term nihilistic can properly be applied. This may seem, perhaps, like a very strange statement, in view of the fact that we have never heard of any other anti-Government party in Russia; but it is a true statement nevertheless. There is no party in the Empire that deliberately chooses violence and bloodshed as the best conceivable means of attaining its ends; there is no party that aims simply and solely at the overthrow of existing institutions; and there is no party that preaches or practises a philosophy of mere negation and destruction. I make these assertions confidently, because my acquaintance with so-called nihilists is probably more extensive and thorough than that of any other foreigner, and I have discussed these questions with them for many hundreds of hours. Liberals, reformers, socialistic theorists of the Bellamy type, political economists of the Henry George type, republicans, constitutionalists, revolutionists, and terrorists I have met in all varieties, both in European Russia and in Siberia; but a nihilist in the proper, or even in the popular, signification of that word—never. Of course, if you use the term nihilist as you would use the term "Know-nothing," merely to denote a certain social or political party, and without reference to the original significance of the appellation, you may apply it to any body of men—to the Knights of Labor for example, or to the Farmers' Alliance; but if you use the word with a consciousness of its primary signification, as you would use the word "yellow" to describe an orange, you cannot properly apply it to any branch of the anti-Government party in Russia.

There is in the Empire no party, organization, or body of men to which it is applicable.

The word nihilist was introduced in Russia by Tourguénef, who used it in his novel "Fathers and Children" to describe a certain type of character which had then recently made its appearance in the ranks of the rising generation, and which he contrasted, sharply and effectively, with the prevailing types in the generation that was passing from the stage. As applied to Bazaróf, the skeptical, materialistic, iconoclastic surgeon's son in Tourguénef's novel, the word nihilist had a natural appropriateness which the Russian public at once recognized. There were differences of opinion as to the question whether any such class as that represented by Bazaróf really existed, but there was no difference of opinion with regard to the appropriateness of the term as applied to that particular character. It was fairly descriptive of the type. The word nihilist, however, was soon caught up by the conservatives and by the Government, and was applied indiscriminately by them as an opprobrious and discrediting nickname to all persons who were not satisfied with the existing order of things, and

VÉRA PHILLÍPOVA [BORN FIGNER].
(A terrorist who has been immured in the castle of Schlüsselberg for life.)

who sought, by any active method whatever, to bring about changes in Russian social and political organization. To some of the reformers, iconoclasts, and extreme theorists of that time the term nihilist was perhaps fairly applicable, and by some of them it was even accepted, in a spirit of pride and defiance, as an appellation which, although a nickname, expressed concisely their opposition to all forms of authority based on force. To the great mass of the Russian malcontents, however, it had then, and has now, no appropriate reference whatever. It would be quite as fair, and quite as reasonable, to say that the people in the United States who were once called "Know-nothings" were persons who really did not know anything, as to say that the people in Russia who are now called nihilists are persons who really do not believe in anything, nor respect anything, nor do anything except destroy. By persistent iteration and reiteration, however, the Russian Government and the Russian conservative class have succeeded in making the world accept this opprobrious nickname as really descriptive of the character and opinions of all their opponents, from the terrorist who throws an explosive bomb under the carriage of the Tsar, down to the peaceful and law-abiding member of a provincial assembly who respectfully asks leave to petition the Crown for the redress of grievances. It would be hard to find another instance in history where an incongruous and inappropriate appellation has thus been fastened upon a heterogeneous mass of people to whose beliefs and actions it has no sort of applicability, or a case in which an opprobrious nickname has had so confusing and so misleading an influence throughout the world. The political offenders most misrepresented and wronged by this nickname are, of course, the people of moderate opinions—the men and women who seek to prevent injustice or to obtain reforms by peaceful and legal methods, and who are exiled to Siberia merely because they have rendered themselves obnoxious to the ruling powers.

From the point of view of the Government there might be some propriety, perhaps, in the application of the term nihilist to a conspirator like Necháief, or to a regicide like Rissákof,—although in point of fact neither of them *was* a nihilist,—but there can be no possible reason or excuse for calling by that name a professor who opposes the inquisitorial provisions of the new university laws, an editor who questions the right of the Minister of the Interior to banish a man to Siberia without trial, or a member of a provincial assembly who persuades his fellow-delegates to join in a petition to the Crown asking for a constitution. These people are not nihilists; they are not even revolutionists; they are peaceable, law-abiding citizens, who are striving, by reasonable methods, to secure a better form of government; and yet, after having been removed from their official places, silenced by ministerial prohibition, and exiled without trial, they are misrepresented to the world as nihilists and enemies of all social order.[1] It seems to me extremely desirable that the use of the word nihilist to characterize a Russian political offender be discontinued. It is not accurately descriptive of any branch or fraction of the anti-Government party in Russia; it does great injustice to the liberals and the non-terroristic revolutionists, who constitute an overwhelming majority of that party; it is misleading to public opinion in Europe and America; and it deprives a large class of reasonable, temperate, and patriotic men and women of the sympathy to which they are justly entitled, by making it appear that they are opposed to all things, human and divine, except bomb-throwing and assassination. If an American journalist, in a discussion of Irish affairs, should class together such men as Patrick Ford, Justin McCarthy, ex-Representative Finerty, Patrick Egan, Charles Parnell, O'Donovan Rossa, John Morley, and the Phœnix Park assassins, and call them all "Fenians," he would probably furnish more amusement than instruc-

[1] See "The Word Nihilist" in Appendix C.

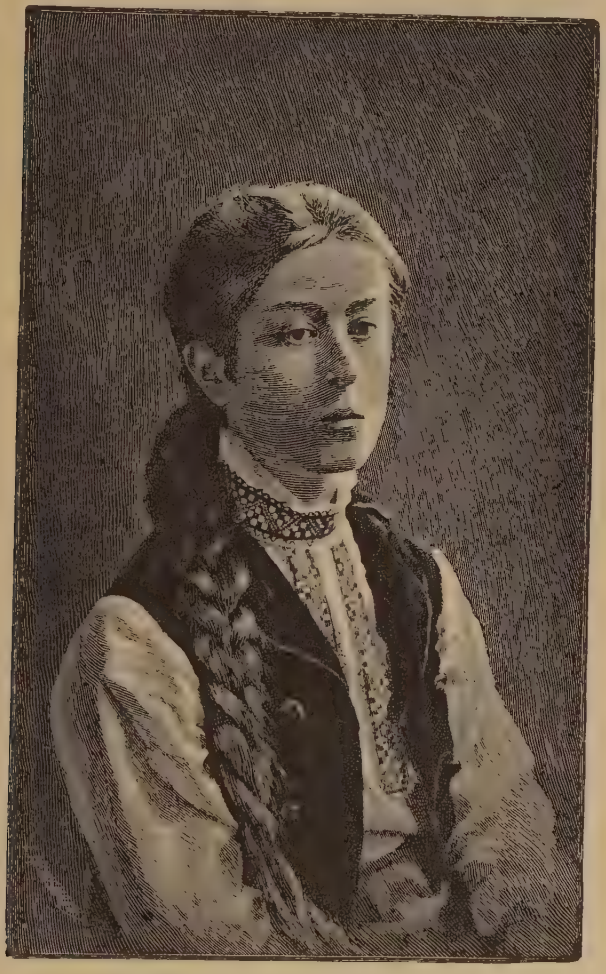
tion to his readers; and yet that is almost exactly what some English and American writers do when they discuss Russian affairs and speak of Russian political offenders generally as nihilists. The novelists Korolénko, Máchtet, and Staniukóvich, the critic Mikháilofski, the political economists Lopátin and Chudnófski, the naturalists Klé-ments and Mikhaiélis, and scores of other political offenders in Russia, are no more nihilists than McCarthy, Morley, and Gladstone are "Fenians"; and it is simply preposter-ous to call them by that name. It is time, I think, for writers in western Europe and the United States to make some discrimination between the different classes of political offenders in Russia, and to drop altogether the inaccurate and misleading term nihilist. The latter was only a dis-crediting nickname in the first place, and it has long since lost what little appropriateness it had as a verbal caricature of a transitory social type. If the reader will examine the documents in Appendix C, he will be satisfied, I think, that the men and women with whom the Russian Government has been waging war for the last twenty years are anything but nihilists. He may disapprove their principles and con-demn their methods; but he will see the absurdity of de-scribing them as a "small but fanatical party, who are called nihilists because they will accept absolutely nothing, and see happiness only in the destruction of everything existing." [2]

For the purposes of this chapter I shall divide Russian political exiles into three classes as follows.

1. The Liberals.—In this class are included the cool-headed men of moderate opinions, who believe in the grad-ual extension of the principles of popular self-government; who favor greater freedom of speech and of the press; who strive to restrict the power of bureaucracy; who deprecate the persecution of religious dissenters and of the Jews;

[1] "Modern Russia," by Dr. Julius Eckhardt, p. 166. London, 1870.

who promote in every possible way the education and the moral up-lifting of the peasants; who struggle constantly against official indifference and caprice; who insist perti-



VÉRA FIGNER AS A YOUNG GIRL.

naciously upon "due process of law"; who are prominent in all good works; but who regard a complete overthrow of the existing form of government as impracticable at present even if desirable.

2. The Revolutionists.—In this class are comprised the Russian socialists, the so-called "peasantists" [*naródniki*], "people's-willists" [*narodovóltsi*], and all reformers who regard the overthrow of the autocracy as a matter of such immediate and vital importance as to justify conspiracy and armed rebellion. They differ from the terrorists chiefly in their unwillingness to adopt the methods of the highwayman and the blood-avenger. If they can see a prospect of organizing a formidable insurrection, and of crushing the autocracy by a series of open blows, fairly delivered, they are ready to attempt it, even at the peril of death on the scaffold; but they do not regard it as wise or honorable to shoot a chief of police from ambush; to wreck an Imperial railroad train; to rob a Government sub-treasury; or to incite peasants to revolt by means of a forged manifesto in the name of the Tsar. The objects which they seek to attain are the same that the liberals have in view, but they would attain them by quicker and more direct methods, and they would carry the work of reform to greater extremes. The socialistic revolutionists, for example, would attempt to bring about a redistribution of the land and a more equitable division of the results of labor, and would probably encourage a further development of the principle of association, as distinguished from competition, which is so marked a feature of Russian economic life.[1]

3. The Terrorists.—The only difference between the terrorists and the revolutionists is a difference in methods. So far as principles and aims are concerned the two classes are identical; but the revolutionists recognize and obey the rules of civilized warfare, while the terrorists resort to any and every measure that they think likely to injure or intimidate their adversaries. A terrorist, in fact, is noth-

[1] A fairly accurate idea of the principles of the socialistic revolutionists may be obtained from the documents in Appendix C.

ing more than an embittered revolutionist, who has found it impossible to unite and organize the disaffected elements of society in the face of a cloud of spies, an immense body of police, and a standing army; who has been exasperated to the last degree by cruel, unjust, and lawless treatment of himself, his family, or his friends; who has been smitten in the face every time he has opened his lips to explain or expostulate, and who, at last, has been seized with the Berserker madness, and has become, in the words of the St. Petersburg *Gólos*, "a wild beast capable of anything."[1]

In point of numerical strength these three classes follow one another in the order in which I have placed them. The liberals, who are the most numerous, probably comprise three-fourths of all the university graduates in the Empire outside of the bureaucracy. The revolutionists, who come next, undoubtedly number tens of thousands, but, under existing circumstances, it is impossible to make a trustworthy estimate of their strength, and all that I feel safe in saying is that, numerically, they fall far short of the liberals. The terrorists never were more than a meager handful in comparison with the population of the country, and they constituted only a fraction even of the anti-Government party; but they were resolute and daring men and women, and they attracted more attention abroad, of course, than a thousand times as many liberals, simply on account of the tragic nature of the rôles that they played on the stage of Russian public life. The liberals, who were limited by the censorship and the police on one side, and by their own renunciation of violence on the other, could do very little to attract the attention of foreign observers; but the terrorists, who defied all restrictions, who carried their lives constantly in their hands, and who waged war with dagger, pistol, and pyroxylin bomb, acquired a notoriety that was out of all proportion to their numerical strength.

[1] Magazine *Annals of the Fatherland*, Vol. CCLXII, p. 152. St. Petersburg, May, 1882.

I met among the political exiles in Siberia representatives of all the classes above described, and I have tried, in the earlier chapters of this work, to convey to the reader the impressions that they made upon me in personal intercourse. I desire now to state, as briefly as I can, my conclusions with regard to their character.

1. THE LIBERALS.—So far as I know, it is not pretended by anybody that the Russian liberals are bad men or bad citizens. The Government, it is true, keeps them under strict restraint, prohibits them from making public speeches,[1] drives them out of the universities,[2] forbids them to sit as delegates in provincial assemblies,[3] expels them from St. Petersburg,[4] suppresses the periodicals that they edit,[5] puts them under police surveillance and sends them to Siberia;[6] but, notwithstanding all this, it does not accuse them of criminality, nor even of criminal intent. It merely asserts that they are "politically untrustworthy"; that the "tendency" of their social activity is "pernicious"; or that, from an official point of view, their presence in a particular place is "prejudicial to public tranquillity." These vague assertions mean, simply, that the liberals are in the way of the officials, and prevent the latter, to some extent, from doing what they want to do with the bodies, the souls, or the property of the Russian people.

[1] The case of Professor Orest Miller.

[2] The case of Professor S. A. Múromtsef, formerly pro-rector of the Moscow university.

[3] The case of Mr. Iván I. Petrunkévich, twice elected a member of the provincial assembly of Chernígof, and twice expelled and banished from the province by order of the Minister of the Interior.

[4] The case of the eminent essayist and critic N. K. Mikháilofski, banished from St. Petersburg the last time, only a few months ago, for the part taken by him in the ceremonies at the funeral of the publicist Shelgunóf.

[5] Sáltikof's *Annals of the Fatherland*, Kraiéfski's *Gólos*, Zagóskin's *Sibír*, Adriánof's *Sibírskaya Gazéta*, and many others. See Appendix B.

[6] See, in Appendix B, a list of the names of Russian poets, novelists, critics, editors, political economists, historians, and naturalists who have been hanged, imprisoned, or banished since the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Nicholas.

An English writer, who signs himself "A Former Resident in Russia," and who seems to me to be not only extremely well informed, but just and trustworthy in his judgments, has recently published, in an English review, an article entitled "Some Truths about Russia," in which he refers to the Russian liberals as follows:

> I have known scores of foreign residents in Russia, but never yet one who, whatever his political opinions may have been when he first visited the country, did not, at last, cordially sympathize with the ideas and aspirations of the Russian liberal party. Throughout the length and breadth of the Tsar's dominions there is not another group of men who, for genuine, wise patriotism, thorough grasp of the burning questions of the day, cordial sympathy with all that is noblest in the character of their countrymen, and exemplary political discipline, can compare with these liberals. The select band of thinkers and writers who rally round the *Russian Gazette* of Moscow and the review called *Russian Thought*, is not only an ornament to a nation still emerging from barbarism, but would do credit to an old constitutional country like our own.

I approve every word of this encomium, and believe it to be fully deserved. I am personally acquainted with many members of the Moscow group of liberals, and regard them with profound admiration and esteem. Few public men in the United States are better fitted than they, by education and by character, to take part in the government of a great state, and no Americans of my acquaintance are animated by more sincere or more disinterested patriotism. Many members, however, of the "select band of thinkers and writers who rally round the *Russian Gazette* and *Russian Thought*" have recently been in prison or in exile, among them Professor V. A. Góltsef, the late N. V. Shelgunóf, N. K. Mikháilofski, Vladímir Korolénko, K. M. Staniukóvich, Gregórie Máchtet, and the novelist Petropávlovski. The last three were in Siberia at the time of my journey, Professor Góltsef has been

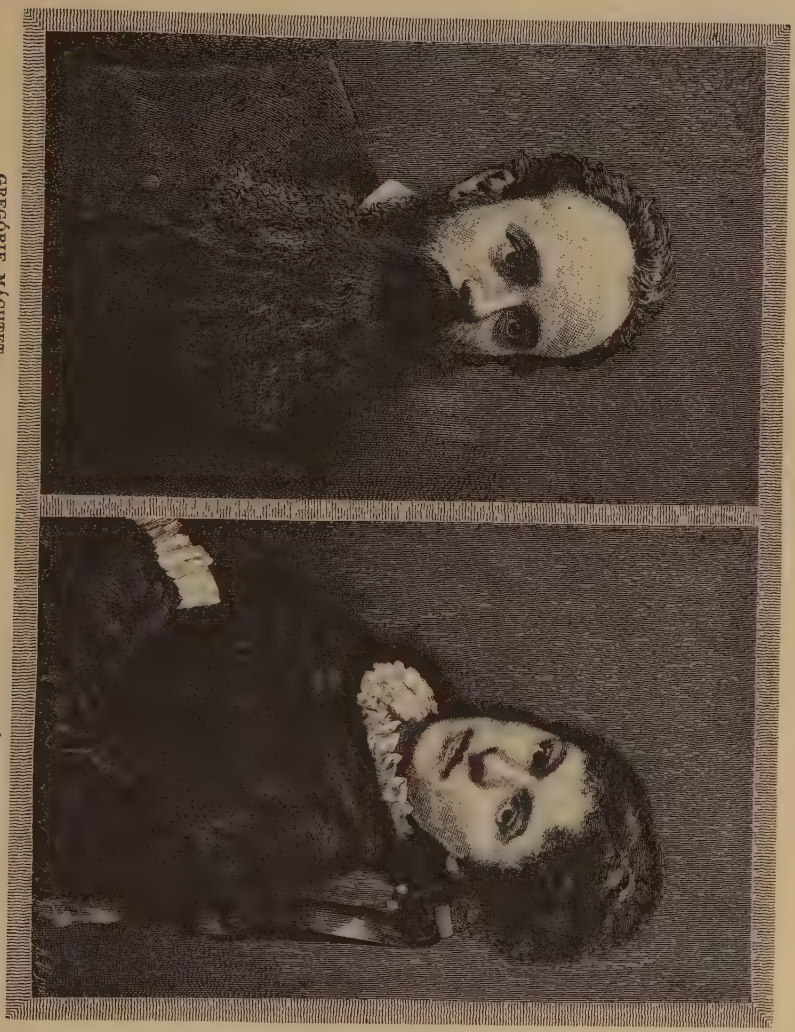
under arrest within a year, and the talented critic Mikháilofski was expelled from St. Petersburg last April.

2. The Revolutionists.—The character of the Russian revolutionists is a controverted question, and in order to state the case against them as strongly as possible, and at the same time to show in what manner and upon what grounds the Government proceeds in its dealings with them, I will quote a part of the authorized official report of a political trial.

In February, 1880, a young man named Arsene Boguslávski was brought before a court-martial in the city of Kiev upon the charge of belonging to the revolutionary party and distributing seditious books. General Strélnikof, the prosecuting officer of the Crown, in asking for the condemnation of the accused, made what seemed to be a carefully prepared address, in the course of which he reviewed the history of the revolutionary movement in Russia and expressed the same opinions with regard to the character of the revolutionists that I heard from Colonel Nóvikof and half a dozen other officers in Siberia. These opinions fairly represent, I think, the Russian official view. The latter part of the procureur's speech, which is the part that deals with the question of character and motive, is summarized in the authorized report as follows:

The procureur then referred to the personnel of the revolutionary party, and asked who were these people that had gratuitously taken it upon themselves to reconstruct society and change the whole order of things. He showed that, with a few exceptions, they were mere boys — often minors. The average age of the accused in the Ishútin case, for example, was only twenty-two and a half years, and in the Necháief case only twenty-three and a half, while the average age of the forty-nine political offenders tried by court-martial up to that time in Kiev was only twenty-four and a half years. The level of their education was extremely low. Out of all the political prisoners brought before the Kiev court-martial, not one had been graduated from the higher educational institu-

tions, and only eight [two of them women] had even completed the course of study of the middle-class schools. The remaining forty-one either had not been at school at all, or had not been gradu-



GREGÓRIE MÁCHTET.

HELÉNE MÁCHTET.

ated. The degree of maturity at which their opinions had arrived was also very low, as might be seen from their publications and from their declarations in the court-room, while their knowledge of the Russian people was limited for the most part to an acquain-

tance with the waiters in *traktírs* [public tea-houses] . . . . . The procureur then passed on to the question of the real object of Russian socialism, showed how that object was made evident by the actions of the party, and cited a surprising number of attempts on the part of socialists to appropriate the goods of others. He referred to a long list of such cases brought to light in connection with previous political trials, beginning with that of Ishútin, and called the attention of the court to the fact that the victims of the crimes of the socialists included even their own comrades. From all that he had previously said the procureur then drew the following conclusions: 1. That "the welfare of the people" was not, by any means, the real aim of the socialistic party. 2. That the destruction of religion, the family, and the state, was only a means of removing obstacles in the way of their real aim. 3. That their real aim was selfish, personal gain. The procureur admitted that, in contravention of these conclusions, it might be argued: first, that not all socialists were so poor as to be in need of other people's property; secondly, that some of them committed their crimes in the face of great and inevitable peril; and thirdly, that in the court-room and on the scaffold they had shown great bravery. In rejoinder he said that while he believed selfish interest to be the chief aim of the party, he did not assert that it was common to all of its members without exception, but only to a majority of them. He would divide the members of the party, so far as their aims were concerned, into three categories, viz: 1. Fanatics, who, however, were so few in number that among the forty-nine politicals brought before the Kiev court-martial there was not one. 2. Persons carried away by the desire to play a conspicuous part anywhere, who wanted to declaim at meetings, to go on pilgrimages to the mound of Sténka Razín, and that sort of thing.[1] 3. Common robbers, who constituted a majority of the party. So far as the second objection was concerned, the procureur was of opinion that, of all the persons brought to justice up to that time, only Soliviof, and the Jew who tried to assassinate Count Lóris-Mélikof ran any great personal risk. All the rest had an opportunity to escape punishment. As for the bravado of the prisoners in the court-

[1] Sténka Razín was a noted Russian insurgent who raised a large force on the Volga River in 1667 and virtually ruled southeastern Russia for several years. He was ultimately captured, brought in chains to Moscow, and there beheaded. He is the hero of the Russian revolutionists' song "On the Volga there is a Cliff." [Author's note.]

room, it ceased — at least in Kiev — when the first sentences of death were pronounced; and as for bravado on the scaffold, it was a mere matter of temperament, and was no more a characteristic of socialists than of common brigands . . . . . In conclusion the procureur pointed out the danger that threatened social order and insisted that it was the duty of the court to treat such criminals with inflexible severity, bearing in mind the demoralizing influence of the verdict in the case of Véra Zasúlich.[1] Any mercy or forbearance shown to persons who had declared war against the state and against society would be criminal weakness. For such people there should be only one punishment — the scaffold.

After listening to the speech of counsel for the defense[2] the court allowed the accused an opportunity to speak his last words.[3] The prisoner admitted the distribution of the seditious books, but declared that he acted upon conviction, and with a desire to promote the welfare of the people by spreading among them the light of scientific knowledge and culture. He had never taken any part, he said, in bloodshed, nor in acts of violence. He regarded a social revolution as inevitable, but thought that it would come in the form of an economic crisis, and that it would be brought about peacefully. He interspersed his remarks with texts from the Holy Scriptures inculcating kindness, meekness, and love to one's neighbor.

After a short consultation the court found the prisoner guilty as charged in the indictment, and, in accordance with sections 249 and 977 of the penal code, sentenced him to death by hanging.

—*Official Report of the Trial of Arsene Boguslávski, Newspaper Gólos, St. Petersburg, March* 4, 1880.

[1] Véra Zasúlich was tried before a jury in March, 1878, upon the charge of having attempted to kill General Trepóf, the St. Petersburg chief of police. The fact that she shot Trepóf was not denied; but the jury regarded her act as morally justifiable, and, since they could not save her from punishment in any other way, they simply set aside all the evidence and found her not guilty. No political offender has had a trial by jury since that time. [Author's note.]

[2] When a political case is tried by a court-martial, the prisoner chooses, or the judges assign, one of the military procureurs to conduct the defense; but as this officer is wholly dependent upon the Crown, and is totally out of sympathy, moreover, with the accused, the defense that he makes is a mere empty form and rarely goes beyond a perfunctory plea for mercy. [Author's note.]

[3] In trying criminal cases in Russian courts it is customary, after the evidence is all in and the speeches of counsel have been made, to allow the prisoner at the bar to say anything that he may then wish to say in his own defense. His remarks are known as his "last words." [Author's note.]

General Strélnikof, the procureur in this case, was a man of striking personality, an able officer, and a brilliant speaker; but he was also a bitter and vindictive enemy; and when speaking, without critics, in a closed court to a bench of sympathetic judges he allowed his passionate hatred of political offenders to carry him beyond the bounds, not only of truth, but of reason. Every artist knows that in drawing a caricature it is necessary carefully to preserve some of the features of the original, and to stop short of such exaggeration and distortion as may render the subject unrecognizable. General Strélnikof's caricatures never would suggest the persons that they misrepresent if they were not carefully labeled "political" and "socialist," as well as "robber" and "fanatic."[1] If the young prisoner in Kiev had been tried by a jury of his peers, in an open court, under the observation of a free press, with an unprejudiced judge to protect his witnesses and a fearless lawyer to protect him, General Strélnikof, I think, would have tried to make his caricature at least recognizable.

According to the statements of the learned procureur, all of the political offenders that had been brought before the Kiev court-martial belonged to one or another of three classes, namely: 1. Fanatics; 2. Notoriety-seekers; 3. Common robbers. They were "mere boys" and intellectually immature, although they were older, on an average, than William Pitt was when he became Prime Minister of Great Britain, and older than Napoleon was when the Convention appointed him brigadier-general after the capture of Toulon. They were almost wholly without education, and yet two

[1] I met many political exiles in Siberia who had been prosecuted by Strélnikof and who knew him well. If he were living I should like to give him two or three of my Siberian notebooks and let him read the estimates of his character that were furnished me by the unfortunate men whom he wanted hanged as enemies of all social order. It would bring a flush of shame to his face, I think, to see how much more fair, accurate, and generous these despised "robbers" and "fanatics" were in judging and describing his character, than he had been in judging and describing theirs.

of them, Madam Kavaléfskaya and Madam Róssikova, had been school-teachers; a third, Florian Bogdanóvich, was a professor of chemistry in a Polish college;[1] Miss Nathalie Armfeldt was the daughter of a Russian general, had been educated in western Europe, and was regarded as an unusually accomplished mathematician and astronomer; Iván M. Koválski and Vladímir Debagóri-Mokriévich were authors,[2] and the former had just written a series of articles entitled "Rationalistic Sects in Russia" for the review *Annals of the Fatherland;* a number of others, whom I afterward met in Siberia, knew two or three languages and had read the works of such authors as Spencer, Mill, Draper, and Lecky; and finally, the "uneducated" prisoner himself was being tried upon the charge of distributing books among the people "in order to promote their welfare by spreading among them the light of scientific knowledge and culture."

According to the procureur Russian political offenders aim to destroy religion; but the prisoner at the bar, when allowed to say a few words in his own defense, quoted more texts from the New Testament than the court, perhaps, had ever before heard, and inculcated virtues, such as "kindness, meekness, and love to one's neighbor," that certainly are not characteristic of Russian officials as a class, and that might well seem to a Russian procureur to be evidences of fanaticism.

In General Strélnikof's opinion political offenders, with the exception of Soliviof and one unnamed Jew, have never shown any personal courage in the commission of crime, and yet, notwithstanding this timidity, they are such formidable criminals, and constitute such a serious menace to

[1] Since his return from penal servitude in Siberia Professor Bogdanóvich has published a volume entitled "Recollections of a Prisoner" ["Wspomnienia Wieznia," Lwow, 1888], and has also translated into Polish all of my *Century* articles relating to Siberia and the exile system.

[2] Debagóri-Mokriévich is the author of "Two Years of Life" and "Recollections of a Russian Socialist."

the state, that they must be hanged without mercy even when they confine their criminal activity to distributing books and quoting texts from the New Testament. He admitted that they die on the scaffold with dignified composure; but such self-control he declared to be "a mere matter of temperament." "Common brigands," he said, often die bravely. "Mere boys," therefore, who are "immature" and "uneducated," who have never shown any courage in the commission of crime, and whose highest aim in life is "selfish personal gain," will die on the scaffold like heroes as a matter of course.

Finally, most Russian revolutionists, in the judgment of the Kiev procureur, are nothing but "common robbers." They go about, it is true, distributing gratuitously books that they have bought with their own money, and quoting from the New Testament the words of Jesus Christ; but that is simply because they are "fanatics." It would doubtless be more profitable and less dangerous to rob with a drill, a crowbar and a dark-lantern; but politicals do not pursue that course because they desire to "play a conspicuous part," to "go on pilgrimages" and so forth, and they expect to rob the poor peasants, as they go, of money enough to buy the books that they distribute, and to compensate themselves for the labor of committing to memory a lot of texts from the Bible. If anybody fails to see the strength and coherence of this chain of reasoning he is "politically untrustworthy," if not "prejudicial to public tranquillity"; and the farther he can keep away from the Russian Empire, the better chance he will have of living out the natural term of his existence.

It seems to me foolish and impolitic for Russian Government officials to try to make it appear that the revolutionists, as a class, are despicable in point of intellectual ability, or morally depraved. They are neither the one nor the other. So far as education is concerned they are far superior to any equal number of Russian officials with whom,

in the course of five years' residence in the Russian Empire, I have been brought in contact. In the face of difficulties and discouragements that would crush most men—in financial distress, in terrible anxiety, in prison, in exile, and in the strait-jacket of the press censorship—they not only "keep their grip," but they fairly distinguish themselves in literature, in science, and in every field of activity that is open to them. Much of the best scientific work that has been done in Siberia has been done by political exiles. Mikhaiélis in Semipalátinsk was an accomplished naturalist; Andréief in Minusínsk was a skilled botanist and made an exhaustive study of the flora of central Siberia and the Altái; Kléments in Minusínsk was a geologist and an archæologist of whom his country ought to have been proud; Alexander Kropótkin, who committed suicide in Tomsk, was an astronomer and meteorologist who made and recorded scientific observations for the Russian Meteorological Bureau almost up to the time of his death; Bełokónski, in Minusínsk, continued these observations, and was a frequent contributor, moreover, to the best Russian magazines and reviews; Chudnófski, in Tomsk, was engaged for many years in active work for the West-Siberian section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society, and is the author of a dozen or more books and monographs; Leóntief and Dr. Dolgopólof, in Semipalátinsk, made valuable anthropological researches among the Kírghis, and the work of the former has recently been published by the Semipalátinsk Statistical Committee under the title "Materials for the Study of the Legal Customs of the Kírghis"; Lesévich, who was in exile in Yeniséisk, is one of the best-known writers in Russia upon philosophy, morals, and the history and influence of Buddhism; Hoúrwitch, who was in exile in Tiukalínsk, but who is now in New York City, is the author of a monograph on "Emigration to Siberia" which was published in the "Proceedings of the Imperial Geographical Society," and is also the author of the excellent

article upon the treatment of the Jews in Russia which was published in the *Forum* for August, 1891;[1] and, finally, the novels, stories, and sketches of the political exiles Korolénko, Máchtet, Staniukóvich, Mámin [Sibiriák], and Petropávlovski are known to every cultivated Russian from the White Sea to the Caspian and from Poland to the Pacific.

Morally, the Russian revolutionists whom I met in Siberia would compare favorably with any body of men and women of equal numerical strength that I could collect from the circle of my own acquaintances. I do not share the opinions of all of them; some of them seem to me to entertain visionary and over-sanguine hopes and plans for the future of their country; some of them have made terrible and fatal mistakes of judgment; and some of them have proved weak or unworthy in the hour of trial; but it is my deliberate conviction, nevertheless, that, tested by any moral standard of which I have knowledge, such political exiles as Volkhófski, Chudnófski, Blok, Leóntief, Lobonófski, Kropótkin, Kohan-Bérnstein, Belokónski, Prisédski, Lázaref, Charúshin, Kléments, Shishkó, Nathalie Armfeldt, Heléne Máchtet, Sophie Bárdina, Anna Pávlovna Korbá, and many others whom I have not space to name, represent the flower of Russian young manhood and young womanhood. General Strélnikof may call them "fanatics" and "robbers," and Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy may describe them as "wretched men and women . . . whose social

[1] In a report on the condition and work of the East-Siberian Section of the Imperial Russian Geographical Society for the year 1885, Mr. V. Ptítsin, a member of the Section's revisory committee, refers to the researches and labors of the political exiles as follows:

"It is well known that the best work done, up to this time, in the East-Siberian Section of the Imperial Geographical Society, is the work of exiles — of such men, for example, as the Polish scientist Shchápof [an exiled professor of the Kazán University] and others. Almost all of the work done and the observations made at the Section's meteorological stations must also be credited to exiles. Why should not the Section gather about itself, for scientific work, all of the educated exiles in the province of Irkútsk and the territories of Yakútsk and the Trans-Baikál? There are among them many people of high cultivation and ardent love for science."

—*Siberian Gazette*, No. 33, p. 1068. Tomsk, August 17, 1886.

depravity is so great that it would shock the English people if translated into proper English equivalents,"[1] but among these men and women, nevertheless, are some of the best, bravest, and most generous types of manhood and womanhood that I have ever known. I am linked to them only by the ties of sympathy, humanity, or friendship; but I wish that I were bound to them by the tie of kindred blood. I should be proud of them if they were my brothers and sisters, and so long as any of them live they may count upon me for any service that a brother can render.

The last of the three classes into which I have divided the anti-Government party in Russia comprises the terrorists. A recent writer in the Russian historical magazine *Rússkaya Stariná*, in a very instructive paragraph, describes them, and the attitude of the Russian people towards them, as follows:

> We have been present at a strange spectacle. Before our eyes there has taken place something like a duel between the mightiest Power on earth armed with all the attributes of authority on one side, and an insignificant gang of discharged telegraph operators, half-educated seminarists, high-school boys and university students, miserable little Jews and loose women on the other; and in this apparently unequal contest success was far from being on the side of strength. Meanwhile the immense mass of the people who without doubt spontaneously loved the serene [*svétloi*] personality of the Tsar, and were sincerely devoted to law and order, and to the embodiment of law and order in the form of monarchical institutions, stood aside and watched this duel in the capacity of uninterested, if not indifferent, observers. We have called this a "strange spectacle," but it ought, with more justice, to be characterized as a shameful spectacle. It was only necessary for the great mass of the Russian people to move—to "shake its shoulders," as the saying is—and the ulcer that had appeared on the body of the social organism would have vanished as completely as if it never had existed. Why this saving movement was not made we

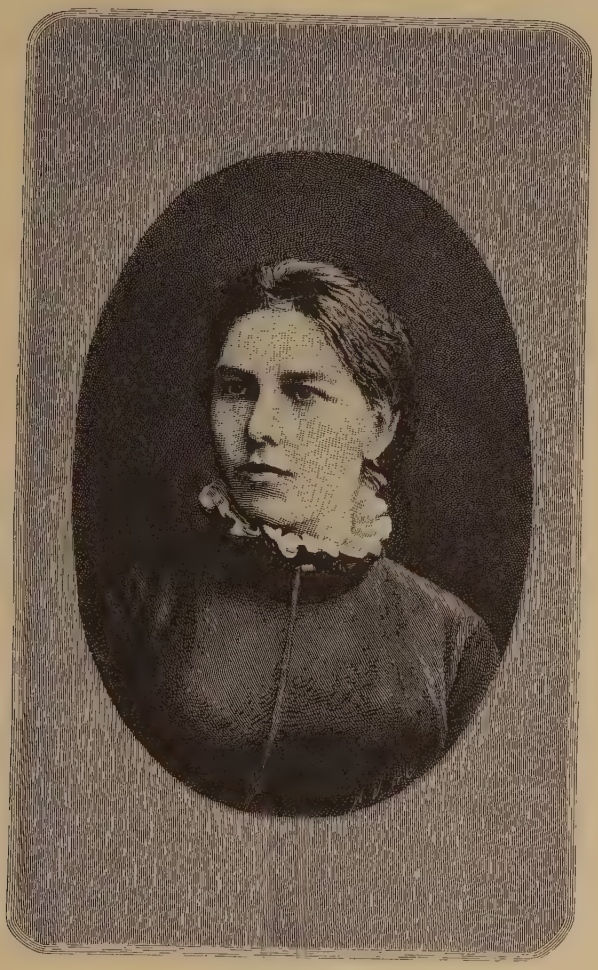
[1] Interview of the chief of the Russian prison administration with the St. Petersburg correspondent of the London *Times*.
—Chicago *Inter Ocean*, March 16, 1890.

shall not now attempt to ascertain, since the inquiry would carry us too far from the modest task that we have set for ourselves. We merely state the fact, without explanation, and, in the interest of historical truth, refer, in passing, to one extremely distressing phase of it. The repetition, one after another, of terrible crimes, each of which deeply shocked the social organism, inevitably led, by virtue of the natural law of reaction, to exhaustion. There was danger, therefore, that a continuance of persistent activity in this direction would fatally weaken the organism and extinguish all of its self-preservative energies. . . .[1] Ominous forewarnings of such symptoms had begun already to make their appearance. . . .[1]

According to the statements of this writer the terrorists of 1879–81 were nothing but "an insignificant gang of discharged telegraph-operators, half-educated school-boys, miserable little Jews, and loose women"; but this heterogeneous organization, notwithstanding its insignificance, almost succeeded in overthrowing "the mightiest power on earth, armed with all the attributes of authority." To a simple-minded reader there seems to be an extraordinary disproportion here between cause and effect. So far as I know there is not another instance in history where a gang of telegraph-operators, school-boys, Jews, and loose women have been able to paralyze the energies of a great empire, and almost to overthrow long-established "monarchical institutions" to which a hundred millions of people were "sincerely devoted." If the statements of Count Lóris-Mélikof's biographer are to be accepted as true, Russian telegraph-operators, Russian school-boys, Russian Jews, and Russian loose women must be regarded as new and extraordinary types of the well-known classes to which they nominally belong. There are no telegraph-operators and loose women, I believe, outside of Russia, who are capable of engaging in a "duel" with the "mightiest power

[1] There are dots in the original at these points which indicate the omission of matter disapproved by the censor. The extract is from a biographical sketch of Count Lóris-Mélikof, published in the historical magazine *Russian Antiquity* for the month of January, 1889, page 65. [Author's note.]

on earth" and of "extinguishing all the self-preservative energies" of so tough an "organism" as the Russian bureaucracy. It would be interesting to know how this comba-



SOPHIE NIKÍTINA.
(An administrative exile who died on the road to Eastern Siberia.)

tive—not to say heroic—strain of telegraphers, schoolboys and loose women was produced, and why they should have directed their tremendous energies against the "serene personality" that was so universally and so

"spontaneously" beloved, and against the "monarchical institutions" to which all Russians, except telegraphers, school-boys, Jews, and loose women, were so "sincerely devoted." But it is unnecessary to press the inquiry. Every thoughtful student of human affairs must see the absurdity of the supposition that a few telegraph-operators, school-boys, Jews, and loose women could seriously imperil the existence of a Government like that of Russia.

As a matter of fact the Russian terrorists were men and women of extraordinary ability, courage, and fortitude; of essentially noble nature; and of limitless capacity for heroic self-sacrifice. Professor Lombroso, perhaps the first criminal anthropologist in Europe, who has had an opportunity to study the heads and faces of a number of these people, and to compare them with the heads and faces of communists and anarchists, speaks of them as follows:

It is for me a thoroughly established fact, and one of which I have given the proofs in my "Delitto Politico," that true revolutionists, that is to say, the initiators of great scientific and political revolutions, who excite and bring about a true progress in humanity, are almost always geniuses or saints, and have a marvelously harmonious physiognomy; and to verify this it is sufficient simply to look at the plates in my "Delitto Politico." What noble physiognomies have Paoli, Fabrizi, Dandolo, Moro, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Bandiera, Pisacane, Perófskaya [Sophie Perófskaya, one of the assassins of Alexander II.], and Zasúlich [Véra Zasúlich, who shot General Trepóf, the St. Petersburg chief of police]. . . . In a study that I have made with 321 of our Italian revolutionists [against Austria, etc.] the proportion of the criminal type was 0.57 per cent., *i. e.*, 2 per cent less than in normal men. Out of 30 celebrated nihilists 18 have a very fine physiognomy, 12 present some isolated anomalies, 2 only present the criminal type — that is to say, 6.8 per cent. And if from these unfortunate men, who represent to us, even psychologically, the Christian martyrs, we pass to the regicides, to the presidenticides, such as Fieschi, Guiteau, Nobiling and the monsters of the French Revolution of 1789, such as Carrier, Jourdan, and Marat, we there at once find in all, or in nearly all, the criminal type. And again the type

frequently appears among the Communards and the Anarchists. Taking 50 photographs of the Communards, I have found the criminal type in 12 per cent. and the insane type in 10 per cent. Out of 41 Parisian anarchists that I have studied with Bertillon at the office of the police in Paris, the proportion of the criminal type was 31 per cent. In the rebellion of the 1st of May last I was able to study one hundred Turin anarchists. I found the criminal type among these in the proportion of 34 per cent., while in 280 ordinary criminals of the prison at Turin the type was 43 per cent. . . . I have been able to study the photographs of 43 Chicago Anarchists, and I have found among them almost the same proportion of the criminal type—that is, 40 per cent. [1]

From the above-quoted statements of Professor Lombroso it appears that the so-called nihilists, even in the cool judgment of exact science, represent, physically and psychologically, rather the early Christian martyrs than the French communists or the Chicago anarchists.

Most of the Russian terrorists were nothing more, at first, than moderate liberals, or, at worst, peaceful socialistic propagandists; and they were gradually transformed into revolutionists, and then into terrorists, by injustice, cruelty, illegality, and contemptuous disregard, by the Government, of all their rights and feelings. I have not a word to say in defense of their crimes. I do not believe in such methods of warfare as assassination, the wrecking of railway trains on which one's enemies are riding, the robbing of Government sub-treasuries, and the blowing up of palaces; but I can fully understand, nevertheless, how an essentially good and noble-natured man may become a terrorist when, as in Russia, he is subjected to absolutely intolerable outrages and indignities and has no peaceful or legal means of redress. It is true, as the Russian Government contends, that after 1878 the terrorists acted in defiance of all the generally accepted principles of civilized combat; but it must not be forgotten that in life and in war-

[1] "Illustrative Studies in Criminal Anthropology," by Cesare Lombroso. —*The Monist*, No. 3, Vol. I, p. 336. Chicago, April, 1891.

fare, as in chess, you cannot disregard all the rules of the game yourself and then expect your adversary to observe them. The Government first set the example of lawlessness in Russia by arresting without warrant; by punishing without trial; by cynically disregarding the judgments of its own courts when such judgments were in favor of politicals; by confiscating the money and property of private citizens whom it merely suspected of sympathy with the revolutionary movement; by sending fourteen-year-old boys and girls to Siberia; by kidnapping the children of "politically untrustworthy" people and exiles and putting them into state asylums; by driving men and women to insanity and suicide in rigorous solitary confinement without giving them a trial; by burying secretly at night the bodies of the people whom it had thus done to death in its dungeons; and by treating as a criminal, *in posse* if not *in esse*, every citizen who dared to ask why or wherefore. A man is not necessarily a ferocious, bloodthirsty fanatic, if, under such provocation, and in the absence of all means of redress, he strikes back with the weapons that lie nearest his hand. It is not my purpose to justify the policy of the terrorists, nor to approve, even by implication, the resort to murder as a means of tempering despotism; but it is my purpose to explain, so far as I can, certain morbid social phenomena; and in making such explanation circumstances seem to lay upon me the duty of saying to the world for the Russian revolutionists and terrorists all that they might fairly say for themselves if the lips of the dead had not already moldered into dust, and if the voices of the living were not lost in the distance or stifled by prison walls. The Russian Government has its own press and its own representatives abroad; it can explain, if it chooses, its methods and measures. The Russian revolutionists, buried alive in remote Siberian solitudes, can only tell their story to an occasional traveler from a freer country, and ask him to lay it before the world for judgment.

CHAPTER XIV

EVILS AND PROJECTED REFORMS

I HAVE regarded and discussed the exile system in this work rather from the point of view of the criminal than from the point of view of the non-criminal Siberian resident; but my survey of the subject would be very incomplete if I should wholly fail to notice the evil influence exerted by the Russian system of deportation upon the moral and economic life of the colony to which the criminals are banished. Opposition to the exile system in Russia rests chiefly upon facts that are not known, or at least are not duly taken into account, by writers on the subject in other countries. With us Siberian exile is condemned because it is thought to be a cruel and unusual punishment. In Russia it is opposed because it has a demoralizing effect upon the Siberian population. In the one case it is regarded from the point of view of the criminal, and in the other from the point of view of society. As the inhabitants of Siberia, and especially of the West-Siberian provinces, become more and more wealthy, prosperous, and civilized, they object more and more strenuously to the colonization of criminals in their towns and villages. "We admit," they say, "that it is essential for the protection of society in European Russia that the criminal should be removed from there, and very desirable that, if possible, he should be reformed; but we do not want him removed to our villages and reformed entirely at our expense. What have we done that we should have eight or ten thousand thieves, forgers, drunkards, counterfeiters, and vagrants turned loose at our very thresholds every year?" Then

the eastern provinces of European Russia, such as Perm, Orenburg, and Kazán, join in the protest, on the ground that their towns and villages are overrun by criminals who have made their escape from Siberia, and that the aggregate of crime within their limits is, in consequence, enormously increased. They say to the Government, "You collect criminals from all parts of Russia proper, transport them across the Siberian boundary-line, and then turn them loose only a few hundred miles from our eastern frontier. A large proportion of them make their escape, and, straggling back in a destitute condition, they quarter themselves upon us. We are as much entitled to protection as the central, southern, and western provinces, from which these criminals were originally taken. If you insist upon sending thieves and burglars to Siberia, instead of shutting them up in penitentiaries, we beg you to send them far enough to the eastward so that they cannot straggle back across the frontier to prey upon us."

The number of criminals now sent to Siberia annually, not including innocent wives and children, varies from 10,000 to 13,000. These criminals may be divided, for my present purpose, into five great classes, viz: first, hard-labor convicts; secondly, compulsory colonists; thirdly, communal exiles [persons banished on account of their generally bad character by the village communes to which they belong]; fourthly, vagrants; and, fifthly, political and religious exiles. The proportion which each of these classes bears to the whole may be shown in tabular form as follows, the figures being taken from the report of the Tiumén *Prikáz o Sílnikh* for the year 1885.

Criminal class.	*Number.*	*Per cent. of whole number.*
Hard-labor convicts	1551	15.16
Forced colonists	2841	27.28
Communal exiles	3751	36.66
Vagrants [*brodyágs*]	1719	16.80
Political and religious exiles	368	3.60
Total	10,230	100.00

When this great body of offenders reaches Siberia it is divided into two penal classes, viz: first, criminals who are shut up in prisons; and, secondly, criminals who are assigned places of residence, and are there liberated to find subsistence for themselves as best they may. The first of these penal classes—that of the imprisoned—comprises all the hard-labor convicts and all of the vagrants, and numbers in the aggregate 3270. The second or liberated class includes all of the forced colonists, all of the communal exiles, and most of the political and religious offenders, and numbers in the aggregate nearly seven thousand.

It is manifest, I think, that when a flood of ten thousand vagrants, thieves, counterfeiters, burglars, highway robbers, and murderers is poured into a colony, the class most injurious to the welfare of that colony is the liberated class. If a burglar or thief is sent to Siberia and shut up in prison, he is no more dangerous to society there than he would be if he were imprisoned in European Russia. The place of his confinement is immaterial, because he has no opportunity to do evil. If, however, he is sent to Siberia and there turned loose, he resumes his criminal activity and becomes at once a menace to social order and security.

For more than half a century the people of Siberia have been groaning under the heavy burden of common criminal exile. More than two-thirds of all the crimes committed in the colony are committed by common felons who have been transported thither and then set at liberty; and the peasants, everywhere, are becoming demoralized by enforced association with thieves, burglars, counterfeiters, and embezzlers from the cities of European Russia. The honest and prosperous inhabitants of the country protest, of course, against the injustice of a system that liberates every year, at their very doors, an army of from seven to ten thousand worthless characters and felons. They do not object to the hard-labor convicts, because the latter are shut up in prisons. They do not object to the political and religious exiles,

because such offenders make the best of citizens. Their protests are aimed particularly at the communal exiles and the forced colonists. Nearly all of the large towns in Western Siberia have sent memorials to the provincial governors, to the Minister of the Interior, or to the Crown, asking to be relieved from the burden of criminal colonization; and in many of these memorials the evils of the exile system have been set forth with fearless candor. The burghers' society of Yalútorfsk, for example, declared that in their town there were twice as many exiles as there were honest citizens, and that the former had almost ruined the latter by means of thefts and robberies.

The burghers' society of Turínsk complained of the constantly increasing quota of exiles quartered upon them, and said that such people would soon outnumber the old residents, and would force the latter to emigrate to some region where criminals were not so plentiful.[1] The unpaid taxes of the exiles, moreover, rested as an additional burden upon society, and especially upon its less prosperous members, while the exiles themselves, having no means of earning an honest livelihood, either gave themselves up to indolence, drunkenness, and debauchery, or were guilty of robbery and other crimes which the police were almost powerless to prevent or investigate.

The town council of Tára, in its memorial, said: "The exiles sent to Siberia from the interior provinces of Russia, either on account of their crimes or because of their bad conduct in the communes to which they belonged, have brought hither habits of laziness, drunkenness, roguery, debauchery, and violence, and sometimes even of robbery and murder; and as they are adroit and experienced criminals, they are seldom convicted in the courts. Besides all this, their evil example tempts into crime the poorer class

[1] The prediction has been fulfilled. In 1885 the old residents began to leave the *okrugs* of Yalútorfsk, Ishím, Kurgán, and Turínsk, in order to escape from the forced colonists. See *Siberian Gazette*, No. 13, p. 325. Tomsk, March 31, 1885.

of old-resident burghers, and especially the young, some of whom already have taken the criminal infection."

The Ishím town council expressed itself with regard to the subject as follows: "The greater part of the exiles have not even means to pay for an identification-paper, and they roam about the town and the district, begging, thieving, robbing, and trying to excite sympathy or inspire terror by calling themselves *brodyágs*. The wickedness of these exile inhabitants of Ishím is so notorious that it has passed into a proverb; and travelers, while they are yet hundreds of *versts* away, are warned to be particularly cautious and watchful while passing through our town."

The burghers' society of Kurgán protested vigorously against a continuance of the practice of colonizing criminals in their town, and declared that the exiles were, in every sense of the words, "a homeless and houseless proletariat and a scourge to the community." They not only were lazy, tricky, depraved, and dissipated, but they were everywhere the corruptors of the young and the sowers of the seeds of crime in the families of the old residents.[1]

The statements of the West-Siberian town councils and burghers' societies need no other confirmation than the statistics of vagrancy and crime in the books of the Siberian police-stations, the records of the local exile bureaus, and the columns of the Siberian newspapers. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Siberia literally swarms with *brodyágs*, escaped exiles, and runaway convicts of the worst class. Thousands of forced colonists leave the places where they are enrolled on the very next day after their arrival.

[1] "Siberia as a Colony," by N. M. Yádrintsef, p. 217. See also the Memorandum Book of the Province of Tobólsk for the year 1884, published by authority of the provincial statistical committee. The official compilers of that volume publish the above-quoted statements, and declare, emphatically, that "there is not the slightest reason to doubt their perfect justice and accuracy. The only wonder is," they continue, "that the members of these town councils had the civic manliness to express themselves thus boldly and justly without fear of reprisals." [Memorandum Book of the Province of Tobólsk, p. 225.]

Between the years 1871 and 1876 the police arrested 3147 runaway convicts in the province of Tobólsk, and more than 5000 in the province of Tomsk; while three times as many more, probably, crossed those provinces unmolested.[1] According to statistics published by the Russian exile administration, the number of forced colonists enrolled in the provinces of Irkútsk and Yeniséisk and the territory of the Trans-Baikál in 1886 was 110,000, and of that number 48,000, or 42 per cent., had run away and could not be found. In Western Siberia the number of runaways was still greater. A census of the exiles in the towns and villages of the two West-Siberian provinces of Tobólsk and Tomsk showed that only 33 per cent. of them were in the places where they had been colonized, and that 67 per cent. of them had disappeared.[2] Thousands of these runaways perished, doubtless, of hunger and cold, or were shot by the exasperated peasants whom they had robbed; but thousands more roamed about the country as *brodyágs*, begging, stealing, attacking freight caravans, and committing murders, in order to sustain their wretched lives.[3] The number of crimes committed by common-criminal exiles between 1872 and 1876 in the province of Tobólsk was 5036, and in the province of Tomsk 4856.[4] In certain parts of the province of Tobólsk, as for instance in the district of Tiukalínsk, the number of judicial condemnations for crime, in every thousand of the population, is

[1] *Eastern Review*, No. 35, p. 2. St. Petersburg, Sept. 3, 1887.

[2] *Siberian Gazette*, No. 48, p. 3. Tomsk, June 26, 1886.

[3] Freight caravans were attacked constantly by armed bands of highwaymen on the great Siberian road between Tomsk and Áchinsk in 1886, and several of the worst stretches were finally patrolled by a force of mounted police. Even the city of Tomsk itself was terrorized in February, 1886, while we were there, by a band of criminals who made a practice of riding through the city in sleighs at night and catching belated wayfarers with sharp grappling-hooks. See *Eastern Review*, No. 9, p. 5; Feb. 27, 1886, No. 40, pp. 1, 2; Oct. 2, 1886, and No. 48, p. 2; Nov. 27, 1886. See also *Siberian Messenger*, No. 23, p. 6; Oct. 17, 1885, and *Siberian Gazette*, No. 38, Sept. 21, 1886, and No. 4, Jan. 1, 1888.

[4] *Eastern Review*, No. 48, p. 3. St. Petersburg. Nov. 27, 1888.

five times greater than the average number in European Russia.[1]

An extraordinarily large proportion of all the crimes committed by common-criminal exiles in Siberia are crimes of violence, and they are not infrequently accompanied by atrocities that are perfectly needless. In the little town of Marínsk, for example, a forced colonist choked a helpless woman to death, killed her three-year-old child by dashing its brains out against the floor, and then, apparently out of sheer bloodthirstiness and deviltry, tore off the head of a chicken, which happened to be the only other living thing in the house. At certain seasons of the year murders, in Siberian towns, are the commonest of occurrences, and you can hardly take up a Siberian newspaper without finding in it a record of one or more. There were four murders, for example, in the little town of Minusínsk on the same night, without an arrest, and from the still smaller town of Marínsk eleven murders were reported to the *Siberian Gazette* in a single letter.[2] Out of 1619 persons tried for crime in the province of Yeniséisk in 1880, 102 were murderers—all of them common-criminal exiles.[3] The small town of Balagánsk, in the province of Irkútsk, has a total population of less than 5000; but there were sixty-one cases of murder there in 1887,—considerably more than one a week,—to say nothing of an immense amount of other crime.[4]

It could hardly be expected that the Siberian peasants would submit quietly to this campaign of robbery and murder on the part of the *varnáks*,[5] and they did not. On

[1] *Eastern Review*, No. 8, p. 6. St. Petersburg, Feb. 26, 1887.

[2] Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 36, p. 5; Irkútsk, Sept. 9, 1884. *Siberian Gazette*, No. 38, p. 1127. Tomsk, Sept. 21, 1886.

[3] *Eastern Review*, No. 17, p. 6. St. Petersburg, July 22, 1882.

[4] *Siberian Gazette*, No. 39, p. 11. Tomsk, May 26, 1888.

[5] The word *varnák* is a slang term in Siberia for a forced colonist or convict. It is said to have had its origin in the practice of branding highwaymen, in the old times, with the letters "V. R. N. K.," which are the initial letters of the Russian words *Vor, razboinik, nakazanni knutom.* [Robber, brigand, flogged with the knut.] By adding two "a's" to these letters the word *varnák* was formed.

the contrary, they made the most terrible reprisals. In the district of Verkholénsk, near Irkútsk, sixty or more dead bodies of runaway convicts are found and buried every year, and most of them have been killed by the peasants.[1] In the spring of 1886 eleven dead bodies were found in the town of Tiumén in the course of a single week, and as nearly all of them were unknown to the police, they were supposed to be the bodies of exiles.[2] In 1884 the Government surgeon of Ishím made 200 post-mortem examinations of bodies of forced colonists that had been murdered by the peasants in his district alone.[3] So exasperated do the old-resident Siberians become at times, as the result of incendiary fires, robberies, and murders attributed by them to the exiles, that they treat the latter with all the barbarous cruelty of Apache Indians. In the Marínsk district, for example,—the same district from which eleven murders were reported in a single letter,—the peasants caught a forced colonist who had stolen their horses and committed other depredations, threw him on the ground, tied his hands behind him, and then filled his eyes with finely broken glass, saying as they did so, "Ah, you *varnák!* You won't find your way to us again."

In view of such a state of things as this it is not at all surprising that the town councils of Yalútorfsk, Turínsk, Tára, Ishím, Kurgán, Yeniséisk, and Tomsk, half a dozen burghers' societies, and almost as many special delegations of Siberian merchants, should have protested, formally and vehemently, against the continuance of criminal colonization. But the Siberian people have not been alone in their protest. Nearly all the governors of the Siberian provinces and territories have called attention repeatedly in their official reports to the disastrous consequences of criminal deportation as now practised; the governor of the Trans-

[1] *Eastern Review*, No. 28, p. 5. St. Petersburg, July 16, 1887.
[2] *Eastern Review*, No. 30, p. 7. St. Petersburg, July 17, 1886.
[3] *Siberian Gazette*, No. 13, p. 325. Tomsk, March 31, 1885.

Baikál has expressly asked that no more forced colonists be sent there, since the territory is full of them already; Vice-admiral Possiót and four Siberian governors-general [Kaznakóf, Anúchin, Ignátief, and Korf] have urged that the exile system be radically modified or abolished;[1] the Siberian newspapers have been hammering away at the subject for almost a quarter of a century; three or four specially appointed commissions have condemned penal colonization and have suggested other methods of dealing with criminals—and yet, nothing whatever has been done. Every plan of reform that has been submitted to the Tsar's ministers and to the Council of the Empire has been found to be "impracticable," "inexpedient," or in some way objectionable, and has finally been put, as the Russians say, "under the tablecloth." The principal reason assigned for the failure of the Government to reform its penal system is lack of money; but it has been conclusively shown by Yádrintsef and by Professor Foinítski that the existing penal system is not only wholly unsatisfactory from every point of view, but is actually more expensive and wasteful than almost any other that can be imagined. Yádrintsef, for example, in computing the expense of the exile system to the Government, estimates that it costs, on an average, 300 *rúbles*, or $150, merely to transport one criminal from European Russia to Siberia; "a sum," he says, "which would maintain that same criminal for a term of at least four years in the most expensive prison in European Russia. In view of the fact," he continues, "that a large number of serious offenders make their escape and are sent back from

[1] General Kaznakóf, governor-general of Western Siberia from 1884 to 1879, was strongly opposed to the exile system, and not only urged its abolition but made a most comprehensive, detailed, and exhaustive study of its results, in order to have a foundation upon which to base reforms. In a protest that he once made against the forced colonization in his territory of a large number of fierce and lawless Circassian mountaineers he said, indignantly, to the viceroy of the Caucasus, that anybody could govern a country if he had the privilege of sending out of it all the people that he could n't manage.

two to sixteen times, it is evident that the above estimate of the cost of transporting one criminal to Siberia must be made considerably higher. But this serious item of expense does not, by any means, comprise all that it is necessary to debit to the exile system. The construction and repair of prisons demand enormous current expenditures, notwithstanding the unsatisfactory condition of such buildings; the maintenance of the large number of sick and infirm exiles who can no longer support themselves is a heavy burden upon the local population; and the work of exiled hard-labor convicts, as shown by long experience, does not begin to reimburse the Government for the expenditures that it makes on their account. If to all this be added the facts that the Government is now spending upon the exile system a comparatively insignificant part of the money that would be required to put it into a satisfactory condition; that the number of persons employed to guard and oversee the exiles is far smaller than it ought to be; that such employees receive only a trifling compensation for their services; that the exiles have no schools; that the asylums required by law are not built; and that the force of guards in Siberia is so small that almost everybody escapes from the prisons and the penal settlements who cares to do so—it will be seen that, upon the amount of money now appropriated for its maintenance, the exile system cannot become successful, either as a punitive, a protective, or a reformatory agency." Nevertheless, this wholly unsatisfactory and inadequate institution, according to the estimates of Lokhvítski, Foinítski, and Yádrintsef, costs the Government of Russia at least five million *rúbles* per annum, and the people of Siberia almost twice as much more. Yádrintsef is of opinion that the 40,000 exile vagrants who are constantly on the march in Siberia cost the peasants not less than 2,960,000 *rúbles* per annum, and that the cost per annum of the whole number of communal exiles and forced colonists that are unable or unwilling to

work, and that live upon the earnings of others, is 7,500,000 *rúbles*, or almost $4,000,000.[1]

Within the past five years great pressure has been brought to bear upon the Russian Government to induce it so to modify the exile system as to relieve the Siberian people of a part of their heavy burden. Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, the chief of the prison administration, has become convinced of the necessity for reform; General Ignátief and Baron Korf, both men of energy and ability, have been appointed governors-general in Eastern Siberia, and have insisted pertinaciously upon the abolition of criminal colonization; the liberal Siberian press, encouraged by the support of these high officials, has assailed the exile system with new boldness and vigor; and the Tsar's ministers have been forced, at last, to consider the expediency, not of abolishing the exile system altogether, but of so modifying it as to render it less burdensome to the inhabitants of a rich and promising colony. In giving the subject such consideration, the Government is not actuated primarily by humane motives — that is, by a desire to lessen the enormous amount of misery that the exile system causes; it merely wishes to put a stop to annoying complaints and protests, and to increase the productiveness and tax-paying capacity of Siberia. In approaching the question from this point of view, the Government sees that the most irritating and burdensome feature of the exile system is the colonization of common criminals in the Siberian towns and villages. It is this against which the Siberian people protest, and it is this which lessens the productive capacity of the colony. Other features of the system are more cruel, more unjust and disgraceful, but this is the one that makes most trouble, and which, therefore, must first have attention.

Just before I left St. Petersburg for the United States I

[1] "Siberia as a Colony," by N. M. Yádrintsef, pp. 213–216. "The Question of Siberian Exile," by Prof. I. Foinítski. *Journal of Civil and Criminal Law*, No. 2, pp. 94-98, St. Petersburg, March, 1879.

had a long and interesting conversation with Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy with regard to the exile system and a plan of reform that he was then maturing. The view of the question taken by him at that time was precisely the view that I have indicated in the preceding paragraph. He did not expect to bring about the abolition of the exile system as a whole, nor did he intend to recommend such a step to the Tsar's ministers. All that he proposed to do was so to restrict and reform the system as to make it more tolerable to the Siberian people. This he expected to accomplish by somewhat limiting communal exile, by abolishing penal colonization, and by increasing the severity of the punishment for vagrancy. The reform was not intended to change the status of hard-labor convicts, nor of administrative exiles, nor of politicals; and Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy told me distinctly that, for political convicts, a new prison was then building at the famous and dreaded mine of Akatúi, in the most lonely and desolate part of the Trans-Baikál. Of this fact I was already aware, as I had visited the mine of Akatúi only a short time before, and had seen there the timber prepared for the building. It was the intention of the Government, Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy said, to pump out the abandoned Akatúi mine, which was then half full of water, and set the politicals at work in it.

At the time of our conversation the chief of the prison administration did not regard the complete abolition of the exile system as even possible, much less practicable. He estimated that it would cost at least ten million *rúbles* to build in European Russia the prisons that the abolition of the exile system would necessitate, and he did not think that, in the straitened condition of the Russian finances, it would be possible to appropriate such an amount for such a purpose. Furthermore, the complete abolition of the system would make it necessary to revise and remodel the whole penal code; and to this step objections would probably be raised by the Minister of Justice. Under such cir-

cumstances all that the prison administration hoped to do was to make such changes in the system as would render it less objectionable to the Siberian people, and less burdensome to the commercial interests of an important colony. After my return to the United States the plan of reform that Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy had in hand was completed, and an outline of it was published repeatedly in the Russian and Siberian newspapers. Its provisions were, in brief, as follows:

First. To substitute imprisonment in European Russia for forced colonization in Siberia, and to retain the latter punishment only "for certain offenses," and "in certain exceptional cases." The meaning of this is, simply, that one class of exiles—namely, *poseléntsi*, or forced colonists—would thenceforth be shut up in European Russia, unless the Government, for reasons best known to itself, should see fit to send them to Siberia as usual. This reform—if the "certain offenses" and "exceptional cases" were not too numerous—would have affected, in the year 1885, 2841 exiles out of a total number of 10,230.

Second. To increase the severity of the punishment for vagrancy by sending all vagrants into hard labor on the island of Saghalín. This section was aimed at runaway convicts, thousands of whom spend every winter in prison and every summer in roaming about the colony.

Third. To deprive village communes of the right to banish peasants who return to their homes after serving out a term of imprisonment for crime. This would be a limitation of the exile system as it now exists, and in 1885 it would have affected 2651 exiles out of a total of 10,230.

Fourth. To retain communal exile, but to compel every commune to support, for a term of two years, the persons

whom it exiles. The amount of money to be paid for the support of such persons is fixed at $18.25 a year per capita, or five cents a day for every exile. To what extent this would operate in practice as a restriction of communal exile I am unable to say. The *Siberian Gazette* was of opinion that it would affect it very slightly, and attacked the plan vigorously upon the ground of its inadequacy.

Fifth. To modify sections 17 and 20 of the penal code so as to bring them into harmony with the changes in the exile system thus provided for.

This is all that there was in the scheme of reform submitted by the prison administration to the Tsar's ministers. It was a step in the right direction, of course, but it came far short of a complete abolition of the exile system, inasmuch as it did not touch the banishment to Siberia of political offenders, nor the transportation of hard-labor convicts to the mines, nor the deportation of religious dissenters; and it restricted communal exile only to a trifling extent. But even this limited and inadequate measure of reform failed to receive the support of his Imperial Majesty's ministers, and was defeated in the Council of the Empire. The Minister of Finance opposed it *in toto*, and said that "the reasons assigned by Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy for the proposed changes in the exile system are not sufficiently convincing." He made an elaborate argument against it, the substance of which may be found in the *Siberian Gazette* for May 20, 1888, page 4. The Minister of Justice declared that the proposed reform could not be carried out without "the essential destruction of the whole existing system of punishment for crime," and that "the substitution of imprisonment in European Russia for colonization in Siberia is impossible." Furthermore, he went out of his way to say that "exile to Siberia for political and religious offenses must be preserved."[1]

[1] *Eastern Review*, p. 11. St. Petersburg, April 22, 1888.

The opposition of these two powerful ministers was fatal to the reform in the Council of the Empire, and in the winter of 1889–90 a new commission was appointed to draw up another "project." When the new project will reach the stage of consideration, and what will be its fate, I have no means of knowing; but my anticipations, so far as a reform of the exile system is concerned, are by no means sanguine. The region that comprises the great mountain-range of the Caucasus has recently been governed by an officer who bears one of the double names that in Russia are so common, viz: Dóndukof-Korsákof. The quick-witted Caucasian mountaineers, who soon discovered that it was virtually impossible to get a desirable thing done by any of the bureaucratic methods of Prince Dóndukof-Korsákof's administration, invented a proverb, based on his name, to express their opinion with regard to the nature of the trouble. It was, simply, "Dóndukof promises and Korsákof hinders." To the proposed reform of the Siberian exile system the witty saying of the Caucasian mountaineers is strictly applicable. The prison administration promises and the Council of the Empire hinders. Then they exchange places, and the Council of the Empire promises while the prison administration hinders. Finally, they both promise and the hindrance comes from an investigating "commission" that has not yet obtained all the money that it hopes to get in the shape of salaries and mileage from the imperial treasury, and that, consequently, has not yet finished its researches in a field that has been examined, surveyed, and investigated ten or fifteen times already.

I hope, with all my heart, that the Siberian exile system may be abolished; but I greatly fear, nevertheless, that it will remain, for many years, one of the darkest blots upon the civilization of the nineteenth century.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

A LIST will be found below of the Russian books, periodicals, original documents, and manuscripts that I have read or consulted in the preparation of these volumes. It comprises only Russian literature, and it makes no pretension, of course, to completeness in any of its departments, but it may be useful to non-Russian students, and it will serve, at any rate, to indicate the limitations of my own knowledge. A complete bibliography of the Russian literature relating to Siberia and the Exile System would probably fill a thousand octavo pages of close print. To the books, manuscripts, and periodicals named in this list I have made a classified subject-index of about 10,000 cards.

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APPENDIX B

THE RUSSIAN PRESS CENSORSHIP

THE censorship of the press in Russia may seem, at first thought, to have no direct connection with the Siberian exile system; but a moment's reflection will convince any one, I think, that it has, upon political exiles, a most important bearing; inasmuch as it is precisely this forcible repression of thought, speech, and discussion in Russia that drives so many men — and especially so many young men — into political crime. The whole Russian revolutionary movement is nothing but a violent protest against cruel injustice and gag-law.

Below will be found a list of cases in which Russian periodicals have been punished, or wholly suppressed, for giving voice to ideas and sentiments regarded as objectionable by the ruling class. I have made this list from my own reading of Russian newspapers and magazines, and I am well aware that it probably does not comprise more than a fractional part — perhaps not more than one-tenth — of all the "warnings," "suspensions," and "suppressions" that have been dealt out to the Russian press in the course of the last decade. I hope, however, that in spite of its incompleteness and inadequacy it will be of some use as an illustration of the state of affairs that drives so many young and energetic Russians into the ranks of the revolutionists, and that is described by the Moscow liberals, in their address to Lóris-Mélikof, as "extreme dissatisfaction in urgent need of free expression."

The dates in the subjoined list are generally those of the periodicals in which I found the records of the punishments, and they are all in the Russian or Old Style, which is twelve days later than ours.

1881.

July 7. The *Odéssa Listók* is suspended for four months.

1882.

Jan. 17. The *Moscow Telegraph* receives a first warning.

Jan. 19. The St. Petersburg *Gólos* reappears, after a suspension of six months.

Jan. 22. The newspaper *Poriádok* is suspended for six weeks.

1882.

Jan. 31. The *Moscow Telegraph* receives a second warning.

Feb. 11. The St. Petersburg *Gólos* receives a first warning, with the prohibition of its street sales.

March 26. The *Moscow Telegraph* is suspended for four months.

April 8. Application for permission to publish a new newspaper in St. Petersburg is denied.

April 15. The *Poriádok* gives up the struggle with the censorship and goes into liquidation.

April 15. The April number of the magazine *Russian Thought* is seized and suppressed.

May 27. Application for permission to publish a new newspaper in Ekaterínburg is denied.

June 17. The *Riga Véstnik* publishes the following in lieu of a leading editorial: "In to-day's issue it was our intention to have had a leading editorial, urging the Esthonians to unite more closely among themselves, and with the Russians, and to work with manly energy for the Fatherland; but we have not been allowed to print it.

July 1. The humorous illustrated newspaper *Guslá* is seized by order of the censor, and its 24th number is suppressed, for making fun of an irrigation scheme in which the censor is interested.

July 1. Application for permission to publish a new newspaper, to be called the *Donskói Pchéla*, at Rostóf on the Don is denied.

July 15. The *Zémstvo*, the organ of the provincial assemblies, gives up the struggle with the censorship and goes into liquidation, after an existence of a year and a half.

Aug. 19. The *Vostók* receives a first warning for criticism of the higher clergy.

Aug. 26. The *Bourse Gazette* receives a first warning for an editorial on the rights and duties of the press and its relations with the Government.

Sept. 2. The September number of the magazine *Russian Thought* is seized, the whole edition of 3000 copies is confiscated, and the plates are destroyed.

Oct. 31. St. Petersburg *Nóvosti* is fined 100 *rúbles* for charging an officer of the Government with brutality.

Nov. 2. The November number of the magazine *Russian Thought* is seized and confiscated.

Dec. 2. The *Moscow Telegraph*, having resumed publication after its suspension, again receives a first warning.

Dec. 9. The *Vostók* receives a second warning.

Dec. 9. The street sales of the *Ékho* are forbidden.

Dec. 16. The St. Petersburg *Gólos* receives a second warning.

Dec. 16. The street sales of the *Moscow Telegraph* are forbidden.

1882.

Dec. 16. Permission to publish a newspaper in Nérchinsk, Eastern Siberia, is denied.

Dec. 16. The *Správochni Listók* of Samára is suspended and its office closed.

Dec. 19. The Moscow *Kuriér* is suspended for three months.

Dec. 30. An article by Count Leo Tolstói is torn from the May number of the magazine *Russian Thought* by order of the censor and burned.

1883.

Jan. 2. The *Nóvgorod Listók* suspends "as a result of causes over which its editors and publishers have no control."

Jan. 5. The *Straná* is suspended for four months because it has manifested "a pernicious tendency and taken a most discouraging view of the state of affairs in the country."

Jan. 12. The third number of the Moscow *Zrítel* is seized and confiscated.

Jan. 20. The *Moscow Telegraph* receives a second warning.

Jan. 27. The review *Annals of the Fatherland* receives a second warning "for sympathizing with socialistic doctrines and for dwelling on the dark side of Russian life."

Feb. 17. The St. Petersburg *Gólos* receives a third warning, and is suspended for six months, on account of its "mischievous tone in discussing the affairs of the Empire and the reforms of the last quarter of a century."

March 3. The censorship of the *Donskói Gólos* is transferred from Nóvo-Cherkásk to Moscow [a distance of 740 miles], and the publisher notifies subscribers that the next number, and all subsequent numbers, of the paper will be delayed until the proofs can go to Moscow and back—about sixteen days.

March 24. The *Odéssa Listók* is forbidden to publish any articles whatever relating to the internal affairs of the Empire.

March 24. The Kharkóf newspaper *Yúzhni Krái* announces that, as a result of "causes over which the editor has no control, the leading editorial article intended for to-day's number cannot be printed."

March 24. The *Moscow Telegraph* is finally suppressed on account of its "absolutely pernicious tendency."

June 9. The magazine *Nabliudátel* receives a first warning for its "manifestly prejudicial tendency."

June 27. The Moscow *Zrítel* receives a first warning for an article upon internal affairs.

July 14. The *Gazéta Gátsuka* receives a first warning, with the prohibition of street sales, for an attack on the editor of the *Moscow Gazette*, Mr. Katkóf.

1883.

July 21. Mr. L. A. Polónski, editor and publisher of the suppressed newspaper *Straná*, makes the following announcement. "The editor is forced to announce that, as a result of the embarrassing position in which he is placed by the suspension of the paper in the midst of the receipt of annual subscriptions, there is left to him no means of indemnifying subscribers other than by the offer of a volume of his collected sketches and essays, which is now in course of publication."

July 28. The *Rússki Kuriér* receives a first warning, for its "prejudicial tendency as manifested in its criticisms of imperial institutions, and for the false light thrown by it on the conditions of peasant life."

Aug. 11. The publisher of the *Ékho* is allowed to return from exile in Western Siberia.

Sept. 1. The proprietor of the suspended newspaper *Gólos* decides to give up the struggle with the censorship and go into liquidation.

Sept. 8. The St. Petersburg *Nóvosti* receives a first warning for expressing sympathy with the suppressed newspaper *Gólos*.

Oct. 6. Editors are forbidden to put dots or asterisks in places where the censor has crossed out matter.

Oct. 13. On the 3d of February the censorship of the *Donskói Gólos* was transferred from Nóvo-Cherkásk — its place of publication — to Moscow. This necessitated sending all proof sheets to the latter city before publication, at a loss of from fifteen to twenty days' time. For a while the editor struggled along as best he could, getting out his paper at irregular intervals as his copy came back from Moscow, and all the time two to three weeks behind the current news of the day. At last, on the 13th of October, he publishes the following cautious announcement: "The editor and proprietor of the *Donskói Gólos*, as a result of certain circumstances, will publish no more numbers of that paper until there is a possibility of getting it out with greater regularity. Of this the subscribers will receive due notice."

Nov. 30. A journalist named Rántsef is expelled from St. Petersburg for an article upon Poland, written by him and published in the *Nóvosti*.

Dec. 15. The Minister of the Interior refuses to allow the St. Petersburg *Gólos* to be revived under the editorial management of a former member of its staff.

Dec. 22. The magazine *Russian Thought* receives a first warning for "pernicious tendency."

1884.

Jan. 15. The street sales of the St. Petersburg *Listók* are forbidden.

Jan. 15. The street sales of the St. Petersburg *Sufflér* are forbidden.

Jan. 22. An application for permission to publish a monthly magazine in Tomsk, Western Siberia, is denied.

Feb. 1. The *Rússki Kuriér* receives a second warning.

Feb. 1. The Vládikavkáz *Térek* suspends publication voluntarily as the result of an order transferring the censorship of it from its place of publication to Tiflis. The editor announces that he "will suspend until a more favorable time for newspapers."

Feb. 19. The street sales of the St. Petersburg *Nóvosti* are forbidden.

March 1. The *Gazéta Gátsuka* receives a first warning for its "unquestionably pernicious tendency." The street sales of the *Sovrémmenia Izvéstia* are again permitted.

April 22. The St. Petersburg *Vostók* is warned a third time, and is suspended for four months on account of its "continued and audacious attacks on the higher clergy, and its unpermissible judgments concerning church government."

April 29. The *Annals of the Fatherland*, the ablest and most important review in the Empire, is permanently suppressed on the ground that its policy is hostile to the Government and to social order.

May 6. The *Gazéta Gátsuka* receives a second warning for the "prejudiced character" of its editorials and "for presuming to question the justice of the first warning."

May 20. The street sales of the *Mirskói Tolk* are forbidden.

May 20. The street sales of the *Svet i Téni* are forbidden.

May 24. Constantine Staniukóvich, the editor of the St. Petersburg magazine *Diélo*, is exiled to Western Siberia and the magazine suspended.

June 10. The street sales of the Moscow *Rússkia Védomosti* are forbidden.

June 13. The St. Petersburg *Eastern Review* receives a first warning for giving false information with regard to the actions and dispositions of the Siberian authorities.

July 1. The St. Petersburg *Nediélia* receives a first warning for speaking with approval of the French Revolution, in an editorial article entitled "A Great Anniversary."

July 8. A correspondent of the Irkútsk newspaper *Sibír* [Eastern Siberia] is arrested by order of an *isprávnik*, to whom one of his letters happens to be distasteful, and sent under guard by *étape* to his home one thousand *versts* away.

July 29. All the numbers of the magazine *Annals of the Fatherland*, for the last twenty years, are excluded from the libraries of all ecclesiastical schools.

1884.

Aug. 5. The St. Petersburg *Voskhód* receives a first warning "for daring to criticize unfavorably the laws and measures of the Government, falsely interpreting their aim and significance, and inciting hostility between one class of citizens and another."

Aug. 19. The street sales of the St. Petersburg *Nóvosti* are again permitted.

Aug. 26. The street sales of the Moscow *Rússkia Védomosti* are again permitted.

Sept. 9. An official list is published of three hundred volumes of Russian books withdrawn from all public libraries by order of the censorship.

Sept. 16. The *Gazéta Gátsuka* receives a third warning and is suspended for one month on account of its "prejudiced tendency."

Sept. 23. The *Official Messenger* announces the permanent suppression of the *Muzikálni Mir*, the *Remesló*, the Moscow *Gazéta*, the Moscow *Nediélia*, and the Polish newspaper *Przyjaciel Mlodziezy*.

Nov. 11. The street sales of the *Minúta* are forbidden.

Nov. 18. The Armenian newspaper *Ardagank* is suspended for eight months.

1885.

Jan. 10. The *Svetóch* is suspended on account of its "unqualifiedly pernicious" tendency.

Jan. 27. The lower house of the parliament of Finland [the Seim] petitions the Tsar for freedom of the press, but is denied.

Jan. 31. The street sales of the *Ékho* are forbidden.

Feb. 18. The dramatic censorship withdraws its objection to the performance of Shakspere's two revolutionary tragedies, "Julius Cæsar" and "Coriolanus," and they are given for the first time in Moscow.

Feb. 24. The censorship of the Ekaterínoslav newspaper *Dnéiper* is removed to Moscow, and the paper suspends.

Feb. 24. The *Ékho* is deprived, for a term of eight months, of the right to print advertisements, and gives notice of its suspension.

Feb. 28. The Moscow magazine *Russian Thought* gives notice that, on account of the prohibition of the censor, Count Tolstoi's "Then What is to be Done?" cannot be published in that periodical.

March 24. The newspaper *Sibír* hints at an occurrence in a certain monastery, "about which the whole city is talking," but concerning which it cannot print a word "for reasons beyond our control."

April 7. The *Sovrémmenia Izvéstia* is suspended for one month.

1885.

May 26. The magazine *Nabliudátel* receives a second warning for its "manifestly prejudiced tendency."

July 4. The Jewish magazine *Voskhéd* receives a second warning for "audaciously unfavorable criticism" of certain laws and regulations relating to the Russian Jews.

Sept. 1. Permission to publish a newspaper in the town of Krasnoyársk, Eastern Siberia, is denied by the Minister of the Interior, without the assignment of any reason.

Sept. 15. The St. Petersburg medical newspaper *Health* is suppressed absolutely.

Sept. 15. The Tiflis newspaper *Drosbá* is suppressed absolutely.

Sept. 22. The *Eastern Review* of St. Petersburg receives a third warning and is suspended for two weeks because it "misrepresents the actions of Siberian officials."

Sept. 29. The street sales of the St. Petersburg *Nóvosti* are forbidden.

Oct. 17. A circular letter from the chief bureau of censorship forbids the publication of any news and the expression of any opinion with regard to the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the emancipation of the serfs.

Oct. 20. The newspaper *Life* is forbidden to print advertisements, and its street sales are forbidden.

Oct. 27. An unpopular man named Alexander Schmidt is appointed by the Government to fill a chair as professor in the university of Dórpat. The students, unable to express their disapproval and dissatisfaction in any other way, insert the following advertisement in the *Dórpat Gazette*, and the censor approves it without looking up the reference: "2 Timothy iv. 14."[1]

Nov. 3. The *Siberian Gazette* in Tomsk asks permission to publish twice a week instead of once. Permission denied.

Nov. 7. The St. Petersburg *Grázhdanín* receives a first warning on account of an editorial entitled, "The Ideas of a Sailor with regard to Naval Qualifications."

Nov. 10. The Kiev newspaper *Zaryá*, "on account of the departure from town" [exile] "of its official editor, has suspended publication until a new editor shall have been confirmed" [by the Minister of the Interior].

Nov. 24. One of the correspondents of the Irkútsk newspaper *Sibír* telegraphs the editor that he has been arrested and imprisoned on account of his last letter, and that his life is in danger.

Nov. 27. The Moscow newspaper *Russ* receives a first warning for "discussing current events in a tone not compatible with true patriotism," and for efforts "to excite disrespect toward the Government."

[1] The verse is as follows: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: The Lord reward him according to his works."

1885.

Dec. 15. The Moscow merchant Ovchínnikof is punished for printing prayer-books without permission.

1886.

Feb. 19. The Moscow *Rússkia Védomosti*, having been forbidden to refer editorially to the emancipation of the serfs on the twenty-fifth anniversary of that event, does not appear on that day at all, and thus commemorates it by voluntary silence.

April 3. An application for leave to publish a newspaper in the East-Siberian town of Nérchinsk is denied.

April 3. Street sales of the Moscow *Rússkia Védomosti* are forbidden.

April 10. Street sales of the *Sovrémmenia Izvéstia* are forbidden.

April 24. A correspondent of the Irkútsk newspaper *Sibír* is arrested by order of a Siberian *isprávnik*, kept two days in prison without food, flogged, put into leg-fetters, and sent back to his place of residence by *étape* in a temperature of thirty-five degrees below zero (Réaum.). He is not charged with any other crime than furnishing his paper with news.

May 6. The editor of the St. Petersburg *Police Gazette*, a purely official Government organ, is arrested and imprisoned because, in an article in his paper referring to a "requiem for Alexander II.," there was a typographical error which made it read "a requiem for Alexander III."

May 25. Suits are begun in the courts against the *Bourse Gazette* and the *Week* for publishing articles reflecting discredit upon Government officials.

June 7. The Moscow magazine *Russian Thought* is warned that it will be suppressed for "pernicious tendency" if it continues to "present the dark side of Russian life."

June 10. The censor in Kazán forbids the use of the word *veliki* [great] in connection with the French revolution of 1793.

June 11. The editor of the *Vólga Messenger* in Kazán is forbidden by the censor to use the word *intelligéntsia* [the intelligent class].

June 12. The *Government Messenger* [the official organ of the Minister of the Interior] prints a list of nineteen periodicals "finally suppressed."

June 14. Governor Baránof, of Nízhni Nóvgorod, asks the chief bureau of censorship to suppress all newspaper correspondence relating to the recent disaster to shipping on the Vólga River, upon the ground that such correspondence would "have a tendency to excite the public mind." [The disaster was the result of the shameless favoritism and mismanagement of the chief of river police in Nízhni Nóvgorod, at the time of the breaking up of the ice in the spring.]

1886.

June 24. The use of Moody and Sankey hymns in Russia is forbidden. [I do not know when this prohibition took effect. I have given to it the date of the day when the fact was communicated to me by the agent in St. Petersburg of the British Bible Society.]

July 10. The censorship of the *Cossack Messenger*, of Nóvo-Cherkásk, is again transferred from the place of its publication to Moscow—distance 740 miles.

Sept. 4. Mr. Kartamíshef, editor of the *Siberian Messenger* in Tomsk, is sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment.

Sept. 21. The Irkútsk newspaper *Sibír* is fined 200 *rúbles* for publishing defamatory matter relating to the chief of police of Yakútsk.

Oct. 18. The Novorossísk *Telegraph* is prosecuted for printing an advertisement without the permission of the police.

Oct. 22. Street sales of the Moscow *Rússkia Védomosti* are forbidden.

Nov. 5. Mr. Notóvich, editor of the St. Petersburg *Nóvosti*, is sentenced to three months' imprisonment; Mr. Polevói, editor of the *Picturesque Review*, is sentenced to two months' imprisonment; and the editor of the *Petersburg Leaflet* is fined 100 *rúbles* for libel.

Nov. 27. Permission to publish a newspaper in the Baltic town of Rével is denied.

Nov. 27. The *Bourse Gazette* receives a second warning on account of its "pernicious tendency."

1887.

Jan. 9. The newspaper *Russian Affairs* is suspended for attacking Germany.

Jan. 29. The *Gazéta Gátsuka* is suspended and its office closed and sealed by the police. Its offense is said to be the printing of two kinds of papers—one sort for St. Petersburg and one for the provinces—the latter containing articles that the censor would not allow.

Jan. 29. The newspaper *Russian Workman* and a number of religious tracts are prohibited by the Holy Synod.

April 23. The retail sale in public places of Count Tolstói's "Powers of Darkness" is forbidden.

May 7. The Tomsk *Siberian Gazette* is suspended for eight months.

May 28. Street sales of the *Sovrémmenia Izvéstia* are forbidden.

June 18. The St. Petersburg *Bourse Gazette* is suspended for one month.

July 30. The Irkútsk newspaper *Sibír* is finally suppressed.

July 30. Street sales of the *Rússki Kuriér* are forbidden.

Oct. 8. Street sales of the *Minúta* and the *Son of the Fatherland* are forbidden.

Oct. 15. The *Gazéta Gátsuka* is suspended for eight months.

1888.

Feb. 11. Street sales of the St. Petersburg *Grázhdanín* are forbidden.

Feb. 21. The newspaper *Russian Affairs* receives a first warning for "extremely indecent criticisms of the acts of the Government."

Feb. 25. The *Odéssa Messenger* is suspended for three months.

March 17. Street sales of the *Bourse Gazette* are forbidden.

April 7. The Sarátof *Leaflet* is suspended for one month.

April 17. Street sales of the St. Petersburg *Grázhdanín* are forbidden.

May 1. The commission engaged in revising the penal code decides that the unauthorized publication for distribution of any work of science or art shall be punished with one year's imprisonment.

May 5. The *Siberian Messenger*, of Tomsk, is suspended for four months.

Sept. 25. The Hebrew newspaper *Gatsifer*, of Warsaw, is suspended for four months.

Sept. 25. Street sales of the *Bourse Gazette* are forbidden.

Nov. 20. The magazine *Diélo* is finally suppressed.

1889.

July 30. Street sales of the St. Petersburg *Nóvosti* are forbidden.

Aug. 1. Mr. Sharápof, editor of the newspaper *Russian Affairs*, is removed from his place, by the Minister of the Interior, for going abroad without notifying the chief press administration of his intention to do so.

1890.

Jan. 1. The magazine *European Messenger* receives a first warning for publishing an article, by Vladímir Soliviof, entitled "The History of Russian Consciousness."

April 1. The Nikoláief newspaper *Southerner* is suspended for eight months.

April 29. The *Moscow Gazette* receives a first warning for "extremely audacious references to the imperial authorities who are at the head of the government of Finland."

June 10. Street sales of the *Bourse Gazette* are forbidden.

June 17. Street sales of the St. Petersburg *Grázhdanín* are forbidden.

July 29. Street sales of the newspaper *Minúta* are forbidden.

Oct. 14. The *Eastern Review* is suspended for four months.

1891.

Jan. 22. Councilor Smirnóf, of the bureau of censorship, orders thirteen verses of the Koran to be expunged from all copies printed in Russia.

Feb. 1. The *Kursk Leaflet* is suspended for one month.

Feb. 23. Street sales of the St. Petersburg *Nóvoe Vrémya* are forbidden.

1891.

Feb. 27. Street sales of the *Son of the Fatherland* are forbidden.

March 6. Street sales of the St. Petersburg *Grázhdanín* are forbidden.

March 13. The magazine *Voskhód* receives a third warning and is suspended for six months on account of its "extremely pernicious tendency" as shown in its publication of Mordóftsef's historical novel entitled "Between Hammer and Anvil."

July 29. A Russian translation of Professor Lester F. Ward's "Social Dynamics" is burned by order of the censor.

The following is a brief classified list of some of the better-known authors and writers who have been hanged, imprisoned, or exiled in Russia, since 1825, for political offenses, or for indulging in too much freedom of thought and expression.

Historian. Kostomárof.

Scientists and Travelers. Potánin, Madam Yefímenko, Kléments.

University Professors. Shchápof, Pávlof, Kostomárof, Éngelhardt.

Novelists and Dramatists. Palm, Dostoyéfski, Tourguénef, Mámin, Korolénko, Máchtet, Staniukóvich, Petropávlovski, Beztúzhef.

Critics. Písaref, Chúiko, Sáltikof [Shchedrín], Mikháilofski, Protopópof.

Poets. Riléief, Odoéfski, Polezháief, Púshkin, Lérmontof, Pleshchéief, Shevchénko, Mikháilof, Kuróchkin, Mináief, Yakubóvich, Volkhófski, Sinigúb.

Political Economists, Editors, Publicists, and Translators. Hérzen, Ogaróf, Chernishéfski, Shelgunóf, Shashkóf, Lavróf, Tkáchef, Berví [Flerófski], Pávlenkof, the two Kropótkins, Gregórief, Protopópof, Krívenko, Góltsef, Madam Pol, Shcherbín, Shchepótief, Priklónski, Yúzhakóf, Vorontsóf, Ánnenski, Aksákof [Ivan], Chudnófski, Ivánchin-Písaref, Yádrintsef.

Miscellaneous. Baron Rósen [author of "Memoirs of a Russian Decembrist"], Beláief [author of "Recollections of a Decembrist"], Dall [author of the great "Dictionary of the Living Russian Tongue"], Yákushkin [a student of and writer upon Russian songs and folk-lore], Tveretínof, Khudiákof, Lesévich [writer upon philosophy and morals], Madam Kázina, Olkhan, Bardófski, Értel, Madam Kafiéro, Osipóvich.

APPENDIX C

REVOLUTIONARY DOCUMENTS

I

Program of the Executive Committee of the Russian Revolutionary Party

By fundamental conviction we are socialists and democrats. We are satisfied that only through socialistic principles can the human race acquire liberty, equality, and fraternity; secure the full and harmonious development of the individual as well as the material prosperity of all; and thus make progress. We are convinced that all social forms must rest upon the sanction of the people themselves, and that popular development is permanent only when it proceeds freely and independently, and when every idea that is to be embodied in the people's life has first passed through the people's consciousness and has been acted upon by the people's will. The welfare of the people and the will of the people are our two most sacred and most inseparable principles.

A

1. If we look at the environment in which the Russian people are forced to live and act, we see that they are, economically and politically, in a state of absolute slavery. As laborers they work only to feed and support the parasitic classes; and as citizens they are deprived of all rights. Not only does the actual state of things fail to answer to their will, but they dare not even express and formulate their will; they cannot even think what is good and what is bad for them; the very thought that they can have a will is regarded as a crime against the State. Enmeshed on all sides, they are being reduced to a state of physical degeneration, intellectual stolidity, and general inferiority.

2. Around the enchained people we see a class of exploiters whom the state creates and protects. The state itself is the greatest capitalistic power in the land, it constitutes the sole political oppressor of the people, and only through its aid and support can the lesser robbers exist. This bourgeois excrescence in the form of a government sustains itself by mere brute force—by means of its military, police, and bureaucratic organization—in precisely the same way that the Mongols of Genghis Khan sustained themselves in Russia. It is not sanctioned by the people, it rules by arbitrary violence, and it adopts and enforces governmental and economical forms and principles that have nothing whatever in common with the people's wishes and ideals.

3. In the nation we can see, crushed but still living, its old traditional principles, such as the right of the people to the land, communal and local self-government, freedom of speech and of conscience, and the rudiments of federal organization. These principles would develop broadly, and would give an entirely different and a more popular direction to our whole history, if the nation could live and organize itself in accordance with its own wishes and its own tendencies.

B

1. We are of opinion, therefore, that it is our first duty, as socialists and democrats, to free the people from the oppression of the present Government, and bring about a political revolution, in order to transfer the supreme power to the nation. By means of this revolution we shall afford the people an opportunity to develop, henceforth, independently, and shall cause to be recognized and supported, in Russian life, many purely socialistic principles that are common to us and to the Russian people.

2. We think that the will of the people would be sufficiently well expressed and executed by a national Organizing Assembly, elected freely by a general vote, and acting under the instructions of the voters. This, of course, would fall far short of an ideal manifestation of the people's will; but it is the only one that is practicable at present, and we therefore think best to adopt it. Our plan is to take away the power from the existing Government, and give it to an Organizing Assembly, elected in the manner

above described, whose duty it will be to make an examination of all our social and governmental institutions, and remodel them in accordance with instructions from the electors.

C

Although we are ready to submit wholly to the popular will, we regard it as none the less our duty, as a party, to appear before the people with our program. This program we shall use as a means of propaganda until the revolution comes, we shall advocate it during the election campaign, and we shall support it before the Organizing Assembly. It is as follows:

1. Perpetual popular representation, constituted as above described and having full power to act in all national questions.
2. General local self-government, secured by the election of all officers, and the economic independence of the people.
3. The self-controlled village commune as the economic and administrative unit.
4. Ownership of the land by the people.
5. A system of measures having for their object the turning over to the laborers of all mining works and factories.
6. Complete freedom of conscience, speech, association, public meeting, and electioneering activity.
7. Universal right of franchise, without any class or property limitation.
8. The substitution of a territorial militia for the army.

We shall follow this program, and we believe that all of its parts are so interdependent as to be impracticable one without the other, and that only as a whole will the program insure political and economic freedom and the harmonious development of the people.

D

In view of the stated aim of the party its operations may be classified as follows:

1. *Propaganda and agitation.* Our propaganda has for its object the popularization, in all social classes, of the idea of a political and democratic revolution as a means of social reform, as well as

popularization of the party's own program. Its essential features are criticism of the existing order of things, and a statement and explanation of revolutionary methods. The aim of agitation should be to incite the people to protest, as generally as possible, against the present state of affairs, to demand such reforms as are in harmony with the party's purposes, and, especially, to demand the summoning of an Organizing Assembly. The popular protest may take the form of meetings, demonstrations, petitions, leading addresses, refusals to pay taxes, etc.

2. *Destructive and terroristic activity.* Terroristic activity consists in the destruction of the most harmful persons in the Government, the protection of the party from spies, and the punishment of official lawlessness and violence in all the more prominent and important cases in which such lawlessness and violence are manifested. The aim of such activity is to break down the prestige of Governmental power, to furnish continuous proof of the possibility of carrying on a contest with the Government, to raise in that way the revolutionary spirit of the people and inspire belief in the practicability of revolution, and, finally, to form a body suited and accustomed to warfare.

3. *The organization of secret societies and the arrangement of them in connected groups around a single center.* The organization of small secret societies with all sorts of revolutionary aims is indispensable, both as a means of executing the numerous functions of the party and of finishing the political training of its members. In order, however, that the work may be carried on harmoniously, it is necessary that these small bodies should be grouped about one common center, upon the principle either of complete identification or of federal union.

4. *The acquirement of ties, and an influential position in the administration, in the army, in society, and among the people.* The administration and the army are particularly important in connection with a revolution, and serious attention should also be devoted to the people. The principal object of the party, so far as the people are concerned, is to prepare them to coöperate with the revolution, and to carry on a successful electioneering contest after the revolution — a contest that shall have for its object the election of purely democratic delegates to the Organizing Assembly. The party should enlist acknowledged partizans among the more prominent classes of the peasantry, and should prearrange for the active

coöperation of the masses at the more important points and among the more sympathetic portions of the population. In view of this, every member of the party who is in contact with the people must strive to take a position that will enable him to defend the interests of the peasants, give them aid when they need it, and acquire celebrity among them as an honest man and a man who wishes them well. In this way he must keep up the reputation of the party and support its ideas and aims.

5. *The organization and consummation of the revolution.* In view of the oppressed and cowed condition of the people, and of the fact that the Government, by means of partial concessions and pacifications, may retard for a long time a general revolutionary movement, the party should take the initiative, and not wait until the people are able to do the work without its aid.

6. *The electioneering canvass before the summoning of the Organizing Assembly.* However the revolution may be brought about—as the result of an open revolution, or with the aid of a conspiracy—the duty of the party will be to aid in the immediate summoning of an Organizing Assembly, to which shall be transferred the powers of the Provisional Government created by the revolution or the conspiracy. During the election canvass the party should oppose, in every way, the candidacy of *kuláks*[1] of all sorts, and strive to promote the candidacy of purely communal people.[2]

Letter sent by the Revolutionary Executive Committee to Alexander III., after the assassination of Alexander II.

MARCH 10, 1881.[3]

YOUR MAJESTY: Although the Executive Committee understands fully the grievous oppression that you must experience at this moment, it believes that it has no right to yield to the feeling of natural delicacy which would perhaps dictate the postponement of the following explanation to another time. There is something higher than the most legitimate human feeling, and that is duty to one's country—the duty for which a citizen must sacrifice himself and his own feelings, and even the

1 *Kulák* means literally a clenched fist, and is a term applied by the peasants to petty capitalists, such as money-lenders, usurers, middle-men, etc., who "squeeze" them in their times of distress.

2 That is to say, people from the *mirs*, or village communes.

3 Alexander II. was assassinated March 1st (Old Style) and this letter was sent to Alexander III. nine days later, when some members of the Executive Committee were still at liberty.

feelings of others. In obedience to this all-powerful duty we have decided to address you at once, waiting for nothing, as will wait for nothing the historical process that threatens us with rivers of blood and the most terrible convulsions.

The tragedy enacted on the Ekaterínski canal[1] was not a mere casualty, nor was it unexpected. After all that had happened in the course of the previous decade it was absolutely inevitable; and in that fact consists its deep significance for a man who has been placed by fate at the head of governmental authority. Such occurrences can be explained as the results of individual malignity, or even of the evil disposition of "gangs,"[2] only by one who is wholly incapable of analyzing the life of a nation. For ten whole years — notwithstanding the strictest prosecution; notwithstanding the sacrifice by the late Emperor's Government of liberty, the interests of all classes, the interests of industry and commerce, and even its own dignity; notwithstanding the absolute sacrifice of everything in the attempt to suppress the revolutionary movement — that movement has obstinately extended, attracting to itself the best elements of the country,— the most energetic and self-sacrificing people of Russia,— and the revolutionists have carried on, for three years, a desperate partizan warfare with the administration.

You are aware, your Majesty, that the Government of the late Emperor could not be accused of a lack of energy. It hanged the innocent and the guilty, and filled prisons and remote provinces with exiles. Tens of so-called "leaders" were captured and hanged, and died with the courage and tranquillity of martyrs; but the movement did not cease — on the contrary it grew and strengthened. The revolutionary movement, your Majesty, is not dependent upon any particular individuals; it is a process of the social organism; and the scaffolds raised for its more energetic exponents are as powerless to save the out-grown order of things as the cross that was erected for the Redeemer was powerless to save the ancient world from the triumph of Christianity. The Government, of course, may yet capture and hang an immense number of separate individuals, it may break up a great number of separate revolutionary groups, it may even destroy the most important of existing revolutionary organizations; but all this will not change, in the slightest degree, the condition of affairs. Revolutionists are the creation of circumstances; of the general discontent of the people; of the striving of Russia after a new social framework. It is impossible to exterminate the whole people; it is impossible, by means of repression, to stifle its discontent. Discontent only grows the more when it is repressed. For these reasons the places of slain revolutionists are constantly taken by new individuals, who come

[1] The place where Alexander II. was assassinated.

[2] The Russian word is *shdiki*, meaning bands, or gangs of brigands, robbers or murderers. [Author's note.]

forth from among the people in ever-increasing numbers, and who are still more embittered, still more energetic. These persons, in order to carry on the conflict, form an association, in the light of the experience of their predecessors, and the revolutionary organization thus grows stronger, numerically and in quality, with the lapse of time. This we actually see from the history of the last ten years. Of what use was it to destroy the Dolgúshintsi, the Chaikóftsi, and the workers of 1874?[1] Their places were taken by much more resolute democrats. Then the awful repressive measures of the Government called upon the stage the terrorists of 1878–9. In vain the Government put to death the Kovál-skis, the Dubróvins, the Ossínskis, and the Lisogúbs. In vain it destroyed tens of revolutionary circles. From among those incomplete organizations, by virtue of natural selection, arose only stronger forms, until, at last, there has appeared an Executive Committee with which the Government has not yet been able successfully to deal.

A dispassionate glance at the grievous decade through which we have just passed will enable us to forecast accurately the future progress of the revolutionary movement, provided the policy of the Government does not change. The movement will continue to grow and extend; deeds of a terroristic nature will increase in frequency and intensity, and the revolutionary organization will constantly set forth, in the places of destroyed groups, stronger and more perfect forms. Meanwhile the number of the discontented in the country will grow larger and larger; confidence in the Government, on the part of the people, will decline; and the idea of revolution — of its possibility and inevitability — will establish itself in Russia more and more firmly. A terrible explosion, a bloody hurly-burly, a revolutionary earthquake throughout Russia will complete the destruction of the old order of things. Upon what depends this terrible prospect? Yes, your Majesty, "terrible" and lamentable! Do not take this for a mere phrase. We understand, better than any one else can, how lamentable is the waste of so much talent and energy, the loss, in bloody skirmishes and in the work of destruction, of so much strength that, under other conditions, might have been expended in creative labor and in the development of the intelligence, the welfare, and the civil life of the Russian people. Whence proceeds this lamentable necessity for bloody conflict? It arises, your Majesty, from the lack in Russia of a real government in the true sense of that word. A government, in the very nature of things, should only give outward form to the aspirations of the people and effect to the people's will. But with us — excuse the expression — the Government has degenerated into a mere camarilla, and deserves the name of a usurping "gang" much more than does the Executive Committee.

[1] Two famous groups of so-called "propagandists" who virtually began the modern revolutionary struggle. [Author's note.]

Whatever may be the *intentions* of the Tsar, the *actions* of the Government have nothing in common with the popular welfare, or popular aspirations. The Imperial Government subjected the people to serfdom, put the masses into the power of the nobility, and is now openly creating the most injurious class of speculators and jobbers. All of its reforms result merely in a more perfect enslavement and a more complete exploitation of the people. It has brought Russia to such a pass that, at the present time, the masses of the people are in a state of pauperism and ruin; are subjected to the most humiliating surveillance, even at their own domestic hearths; and are powerless even to regulate their own communal and social affairs. The protection of the law and of the Government is enjoyed only by the extortionist and the exploiter, and the most exasperating robbery goes unpunished. But, on the other hand, what a terrible fate awaits the man who sincerely considers the general good! You know very well, your Majesty, that it is not only socialists who are exiled and prosecuted. Can it be possible that the *Government* is the guardian of such "order"? Is it not rather probable that this is the work of a "gang" — the evidence of a complete usurpation?

These are the reasons why the Russian Government exerts no moral influence, and has no support among the people. These are the reasons why Russia brings forth so many revolutionists. These are the reasons why even such a deed as Tsaricide excites in the minds of a majority of the people only gladness and sympathy. Yes, your Majesty! Do not be deceived by the reports of flatterers and sycophants — Tsaricide, in Russia, is popular.

From such a state of affairs there can be only two exits: either a revolution, absolutely inevitable and not to be averted by any punishments, or a voluntary turning of the Supreme Power to the people. In the interest of our native land, in the hope of preventing the useless waste of energy, in the hope of averting the terrible miseries that always accompany revolution, the Executive Committee approaches your Majesty with the advice to take the second course. Be assured, so soon as the Supreme Power ceases to rule arbitrarily, so soon as it firmly resolves to accede to the demands of the people's conscience and consciousness, you may, without fear, discharge the spies that disgrace the administration, send your guards back to their barracks, and burn the scaffolds that are demoralizing the people. The Executive Committee will voluntarily terminate its own existence, and the organizations formed about it will disperse, in order that their members may devote themselves to the work of culture among the people of their native land.

We address your Majesty as those who have discarded all prejudices, and who have suppressed the distrust created by the actions of the Government throughout a century. We forget that you are the representative of the authority that has so often deceived and that has so injured

the people. We address you as a citizen and as an honest man. We hope that the feeling of personal exasperation will not extinguish in your mind your consciousness of your duties and your desire to know the truth. *We* also might feel exasperation. You have lost your father. We have lost not only our fathers, but our brothers, our wives, our children and our dearest friends. But we are ready to suppress personal feeling if it be demanded by the welfare of Russia. We expect the same from you.

We set no conditions for you — do not let our proposition irritate you. The conditions that are prerequisite to a change from revolutionary activity to peaceful labor are created, not by us, but by history. These conditions, in our opinion, are two.

1. A general amnesty to cover all past political crimes; for the reason that they were not crimes but fulfilments of civil duty.

2. The summoning of representatives of the whole Russian people to examine the existing framework of social and governmental life, and to remodel it in accordance with the people's wishes.

We regard it as necessary, however, to remind you that the legalization of the Supreme Power, by the representatives of the people, can be valid only in case the elections are perfectly free. For this reason such elections must be held under the following conditions.

1. Delegates are to be sent from all classes, without distinction, and in number are to be proportionate to the number of inhabitants.

2. There shall be no limitations, either for voters or delegates.

3. The canvass and the elections shall be absolutely unrestricted, and therefore the Government, pending the organization of the National Assembly, shall authorize, in the form of temporary measures,

a. Complete freedom of the press.
b. Complete freedom of speech.
c. Complete freedom of public meeting.
d. Complete freedom of election program.

This is the only way in which Russia can return to the path of normal and peaceful development.

We declare solemnly, before the people of our native land and before the whole world, that our party will submit unconditionally to the decisions of a National Assembly elected in the manner above indicated, and that we will not allow ourselves, in future, to offer violent resistance to any Government that the National Assembly may sanction.

And now, your Majesty, decide! Before you are two courses, and you are to make your choice between them. We can only trust that your intelligence and conscience may suggest to you the only decision that is compatible with the welfare of Russia, with your own dignity, and with your duty to your native land. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

THE WORD NIHILIST.

If the reader has read attentively the foregoing documents, he must see, I think, how inappropriate the word nihilist is when applied to the Russian revolutionists, or even to the terrorists. If the authors of these documents are not nihilists, then there are no nihilists in Russia; and the wild-eyed iconoclast whose philosophy is "the flat negation of all faith and hope, whether in the social, political, or spiritual order," and who is "called nihilist because he will accept nothing and only sees happiness in the destruction of everything existing," is a purely imaginary being. Outside of certain books, he has no more reality than the conventional devil with horns, tail, and a three-tined pitchfork.

An intelligent Russian, who occupied a prominent position in the revolutionary party, and who, at one time, was a member, I think, of the Executive Committee, refers to the misuse in Europe of the word nihilist as follows:

The militant section of the *intelligéntsia* [the educated or intelligent class], that which I call the revolutionary, has, in Europe, received the strange name of nihilist. The title proves that the most erroneous notions on the subject of Russian revolutionists are current outside Russia. If, in fact, Europe understood the Russian revolutionary movement, and that which is going on among the *intelligéntsia*, this word would certainly not have been used any more than it is in Russia. The name, indeed, is only used among us in a bad sense, and only by persons capable of saying, "The anarchist party has at last attained to power in England — Mr. Labouchere is Prime Minister." In Russia there are journals capable of writing such a phrase, but if, relying on a telegram of this description, I were to call Mr. Labouchere an anarchist, it would prove only one thing — that I was totally ignorant as to who Mr. Labouchere is, and of what anarchism consists. The name of nihilist arose in Russia under those merely passing and fortuitous circumstances which accompanied the initial movement of the intelligent class at the beginning of the reign of Alexander II. Russia had just escaped from the yoke of the reign of Nicholas, and was preparing to throw off that of serfdom. Ideas, having burst their chains, began to work feverishly. All Russia cursed the past and leaned out toward the future. . . . All men began reasoning, criticizing, denying, inquiring. . . . The tendency toward democratic ideas manifested itself occasionally by the most exaggerated aversion to everything that was aristocratic, to everything that smacked of the nobility, and consequently to all the formali-

ties of superficial civilization. Uncleanly faces, disheveled hair, and fantastic clothes were to be seen. In conversation, to give proof of a wilful coarseness, the language of peasants was used. Contempt for the hypocritical and conventional formal morality, contempt for the ridiculous traditions which had so long been considered the expression of the wisdom of the state, indignation at the oppression borne by the individual were expressed by an absolute negation of authority of all kinds, and in the most exaggerated tendency toward liberty. All this certainly lent itself to caricature, all this allowed prejudiced persons to formulate against the intelligent class the accusation of wanting to destroy everything, of admitting the sacredness of nothing, of being without heart, without morality, and so forth. Even in the intelligent class, a few, from a spirit of contradiction, and by way of provoking the reactionists, began to adopt this name. Thus, in Nekrásof,[1] a son answering his father's reproaches says, "Nihilist — 't is a foolish word. But if by it you understand a frank man, who does not care to live on the possessions of others, who works, who seeks after the truth, tries that his life may not be useless, who bites his thumb at every rogue and occasionally knocks one down, then I don't see any harm; call me nihilist, why not?"

Nevertheless, only a small number among well-known persons, like Dmítri Písaref, for example, accepted this nickname; and even then only, so to say, for the moment. The absurdity of the word nihilism was too apparent. Besides, the very facts which had called forth the nickname naturally disappeared very rapidly. The leaning toward outward manifestations gave way to positive work with redoubled energy, and soon all these childish things — the women cutting their hair short, or exaggerated rudeness of manner — became discredited. Thus the word nihilism, which in earlier times had some meaning, at least as a caricature, a few years later lost all definite significance. In Russia no serious writer, even though he were reactionary, would use it to designate the revolutionists. The word has passed forever into the domain of pamphlets and of insults. In Europe, on the contrary, the word nihilism has the greatest vogue. The strangest thing is, this caricature is believed in as something real. Nihilism is considered a special doctrine founded on personal negation of all positive ideals. This is repeated again and again, even in other works than those of Cheddo-Ferotti. And this is not remarkable. But it is to be regretted that we do not find much more accuracy in a writer so conscientious and so erudite as M. Leroy-Beaulieu, . . . who even sinks so low as to give the following definition of the doctrine of nihilism: "Take the heavens and the earth, take the state and the church, the kings and the gods, and spit upon them. That is our symbol."

[1] The well-known Russian poet and journalist.

We may certainly admit that if by nihilism we understand nonsense, nihilism and nonsense will have one and the same meaning. But it is equally true that with such methods of inquiry it is very difficult to succeed in understanding the real meaning of words and facts. And if we begin to ask where, in Russia, is the "actual fact" that might correspond to the word nihilism, we shall find nothing but the general intellectual movement that I have tried to describe. . . . Assuredly, the intellectual movement in Russia, as elsewhere, may, in certain individual cases, give rise to some ridiculous results, silly, lending themselves to caricature, sometimes, perhaps, even criminal. It is precisely from these special facts that the notion of nihilism has been built up, uniting them without any reason into one single idea, although they had no connection in reality. Thus, in nature, there are creatures that have tails; others that have the scales of lizards; others, again, with paws and claws like tigers; some, finally, with wings. When you combine all these attributes in a dragon, you have before you a creature of your imagination and not a real being. But, although the dragon plays a very useful part in stories with which to frighten children, it has no place in natural history. Neither, in a serious study of Russia, can nihilism, as a doctrine or a special tendency, have a place.

— "Russia, Political and Social," by L. Tikhomírov. London, 1888.

APPENDIX D

LAWS AND ORDERS OF THE GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO POLITICAL OFFENSES AND OFFENDERS

THE following are a few sections from the "Rules Relating to Measures for the Preservation of National Order and Public Tranquillity," approved by Alexander III. on the 14th of August, 1881, and promulgated in an Imperial Command on the 4th of September of the same year.

SECTION 5. [*a*] When public tranquillity in any locality shall be disturbed by criminal attempts against the existing imperial form of government, or against the security of private persons and their property, or by preparations for such attempts, so that, for the preservation of order, a resort to the existing permanent laws seems to be insufficient, then that locality may be declared in a state of reinforced safeguard.

[*b*] When by reason of such attempts the population of a certain place shall be thrown into a state of alarm which creates a necessity for the adoption of exceptional measures to immediately reëstablish order, then the said place may be declared in a state of extraordinary safeguard.[1]

SECTION 15. Within the limits of such places [places declared to be in a state of reinforced safeguard] governors-general, governors, and municipal chiefs of police may [*a*] issue obligatory ordinances relating to matters connected with the preservation of public tranquillity and the security of the Empire, and [*b*] punish by fine and imprisonment violations of such ordinances.

SECTION 16. Governors-general, governors, and municipal chiefs of police are authorized also [*a*] to settle by administrative process cases involving violation of the obligatory ordinances issued by them; [*b*] to prohibit all popular, social, and even private meetings; [*c*] to close temporarily, or for the whole term of reinforced safeguard, all commercial and industrial establishments; and [*d*] to prohibit particular persons from residing in places declared to be in a state of reinforced safeguard.

[1] Reinforced safeguard [*usílenoi akhrána*] and extraordinary safeguard [*cherezvuichái-noi akhrána*] are equivalent to our major state and minor state of siege.

[Remark.—Banishment to a specified place, even to one's native place, with obligatory residence there, will be allowed only after communication with the Minister of the Interior. Rules for such banishment are set forth in Sections 32–36.]

SECTION 32. The banishment of a private person by administrative process to any particular locality in European or Asiatic Russia, with obligatory residence there for a specified time, may not take place otherwise than with an observance of the following rules:

SECTION 33. The proper authority, upon becoming convinced of the necessity for the banishment of a private person, shall make a statement to that effect to the Minister of the Interior, with a detailed explanation of the reasons for the adoption of this measure, and also a proposition with regard to the period of banishment. [Remark.—The preliminary imprisonment of a person thus presented for exile to a specified place may be extended, by authority of the Minister of the Interior, until such time as a decision shall be reached in his case.]

SECTION 34. Presentations of this kind will be considered by a special council in the Ministry of the Interior, under the presidency of one of the Minister's associates, such council to consist of two members from the Ministry of the Interior and two members from the Ministry of Justice. The decisions of this council shall be submitted to the Minister of the Interior for confirmation.

SECTION 35. While considering presentations for exile the above-mentioned council may call for supplemental information or explanations, and, in case of necessity, may summon for personal examination the individual nominated for banishment.

SECTION 36. A period of from one to five years shall be designated as the term for continuous residence in the assigned place of exile. [Remark.—The term of banishment may be shortened or lengthened, in the manner prescribed in Section 34, within the limits set by section 36.[1]]

The following are the sections of the Russian penal code under which political offenders are prosecuted when brought before the courts:

SECTION 245. All persons found guilty of composing and circulating written or printed documents, books, or representations calculated to create disrespect for the Supreme Authority, or for the personal character of the Gossudar [the Tsar], or for the Government of his Empire, shall be condemned, as insulters of Majesty, to deprivation of all civil rights, and to from ten to twelve years of penal servitude. [This punishment carries

[1] *Journal of Civil and Criminal Law* [the organ of the St. Petersburg Bar Association], No. 6, Dec., 1881, pp. clv–clxi.

with it exile in Siberia for what remains of life after the expiration of the hard-labor sentence.]

SECTION 249. All persons who shall engage in rebellion against the Supreme Authority — that is, who shall take part in collective and conspirative insurrection against the Gossudar and the Empire; and also all persons who shall plan the overthrow of the Government in the Empire as a whole, or in any part thereof; or who shall intend to change the existing form of government, or the order of succession to the throne established by law; all persons who, for the attainment of these ends, shall organize or take part in a conspiracy, either actively and with knowledge of its object, or by participation in a conspirative meeting, or by storing or distributing weapons, or by other preparations for insurrection — all such persons, including not only those most guilty, but their associates, instigators, prompters, helpers, and concealers, shall be deprived of all civil rights and be put to death. Those who have knowledge of such evil intentions, and of preparations to carry them into execution, and who, having power to inform the Government thereof, do not fulfil that duty, shall be subjected to the same punishment.

SECTION 250. If the guilty persons have not manifested an intention to resort to violence, but have organized a society or association intended to attain, at a more or less remote time in the future, the objects set forth in Section 249, or have joined such an association, they shall be sentenced, according to the degree of their criminality, either to from four to six years of penal servitude, with deprivation of all civil rights [including exile to Siberia for life] . . . or to colonization in Siberia [without penal servitude], or to imprisonment in a fortress from one year and four months to four years.

These sections, it will be observed, are tolerably comprehensive. They not only include all attempts to overthrow the Government *vi et armis;* they not only cover all action "calculated to create disrespect for Majesty"; but they provide for the punishment of the mere intention to bring about a change of administration, at a remote time in the future, by means of peaceable discussion and the education of the people. Even this is not all. A man may be perfectly loyal; he may never have given expression to a single thought calculated to create disrespect for the Gossudar, or the Gossudar's Government; and yet, if he comes accidentally to know that his sister, or his brother, or his friend belongs to a society which contemplates a "change in the existing form of government," and if he does not go voluntarily to the chief of gendarmes and betray that brother, sister, or friend, the law is adequate to send him to Siberia for life.

APPENDIX E

THE TOMSK FORWARDING PRISON

SOME time after the publication in *The Century Magazine* of the article bearing the above title, an English traveler—Mr. H. de Windt—visited one or more of the Tomsk prisons, and wrote to the London *Pall Mall Gazette* a letter in which he said, among other things, that "the Tomsk prison, as graphically described in the pages of *The Century Magazine*, does not exist." His first letter, and the correspondence to which it gave rise, will be found below.

I

TOMSK, SIBERIA, September.

I should first mention that permission to visit Tomsk, or any other Siberian prison [criminal or political], was at once granted to me on application to the Russian prison authorities, and without conditions as to time or place. Having at St. Petersburg signified my intention of not arriving at Tomsk until the 3d of October, I this morning presented myself at the prison gates of that city. This being the height of the transportation season, no time was lost on the way. Tomsk is the depot for Eastern Siberia and its prison, consequently, more likely at the present time to be overcrowded and "teeming with horrors" than at any other. I need hardly add that this was not my only reason for arriving unexpectedly.

The city of Tomsk is situated almost in the heart of Siberia, and lies rather more than half-way from St. Petersburg to the gold mines of Nertchinsk—the dreaded mines of which so much has been written of late. As far as Tomsk the journey is made entirely by steam, by way of the Volga and Obi rivers and Ural railway. At Tomsk the march commences, and if [physically] fit, a prisoner proceeds on foot to the prison or penal settlement to which he is sentenced. In case of sickness a score or so of telegas, or wooden carts, accompany each gang. Convicts for the island of Sakhalin are now sent by sea, in the cool season, from Odessa.

On producing the necessary document, signed by the Minister of the Interior at St. Petersburg, I was at once admitted to the Goubernski

Prison, a large two-storied brick building situated on the outskirts of the town. From the central and principal entrance a flight of stone steps lead to landings on the first and second story. Right and left of these are light, spacious, well-ventilated corridors, 100 by 15 feet, and on either side of these the "kameras," or public cells. There are sixteen in all, eight on each floor. I entered and minutely examined each, and can safely say that so far as regards cleanliness, ventilation, and light, no prison in Europe could have been better. The walls were whitewashed, the wooden flooring scraped and spotlessly clean, while three large barred windows [looking on to a public thoroughfare] let in light and air. Most of the prisoners were employed — some tailoring, some cobbling, others cigarette-making, and a few reading and writing — for a well-behaved convict in Siberia has many privileges. I should mention that the most crowded "kamera" I saw measured eighty feet long by twenty-four broad, and was fifteen feet high. It contained forty-one men, each of whom had his own canvas mattress and linen pillow [marked with the Government stamp] laid out upon the sleeping-platform, seventy feet long by fourteen broad, that ran down the center of the room. The sanitary arrangements were here, as elsewhere, perfect. I could not, throughout the prison, detect an offensive or even disagreeable smell. The infirmary in the upper story consists of two lofty rooms each forty-six feet long by eighteen feet broad. The wards are made to accommodate thirty patients, but there were to-day only six in all. Here, again, the light, cheerful rooms, iron bedsteads, clean white sheets, and scrupulous cleanliness would have done credit to a London or Paris hospital. Convalescents were dressed in warm, white flannel dressing-gowns, striped with blue — the infirmary costume. As I left, broth and white bread were brought to a patient. The prison doctor attends regularly morning and evening. With a passing glance at the pretty chapel, we next visited the ground floor, which consists of cells for political prisoners; four punishment cells [not dark]; a stone chamber, bisected by a wire grating, where prisoners are permitted to see their friends; the kitchen and bakery. I saw but two politicals — one a journalist undergoing a sentence of three months' imprisonment for a seditious article in a local newspaper; the other, for a greater offense, on his way from Moscow to Nertchinsk. Both wore their own clothes. A table, a chair, books, writing-materials, a lamp, and an iron bedstead, with linen sheets and pillow, comprised the furniture of these cells, which measured twelve feet high and twenty feet long by sixteen feet broad, and looked out through a large barred window on to the prison garden. The punishment cells, which with one exception were empty, measured eight feet high, ten feet long by ten broad. A description of the kitchen, with its clean, white-washed walls, tiled floor, huge caldrons for soup, and bright copper saucepans — of the bakery, with its innumerable ovens and rows upon rows of bread, brown and white, would be superfluous. Suffice it to say that a prisoner actually receives half a pound of meat,

a large bowl of "shtchi" or cabbage soup, one pound of brown bread, and a basin of gruel daily; a pint of "kvass," or spruce beer. In addition to this a prisoner may purchase, at his own cost, tea and pastry, cheese, butter, tobacco and other luxuries, but not alcohol. As regards clothing, he is allowed from the 1st of May to the 1st of September, three white linen suits, one sleeveless gray mezi great coat, two Glengarry caps of the same material, and every two months a pair of stout leather shoes. If on the march, these are replaced as soon as worn out. Only the most dangerous criminals wear chains. A pair of these is now in my possession. They weigh seven pounds and are worn over the trousers; *not*, as has been stated, against the skin. Next the "Goubernski," and separated from it by a public road, is a smaller prison (also of brick and two-storied) for women, criminal and political. The matron, a staid, respectable person in black, conducted me round the "kameras." Save that they are somewhat smaller, the latter are precisely similar to those of the "Goubernski," as light, clean, well-ventilated, and free from smell. In Siberia female prisoners do not wear prison dress, nor, with the exception of the sentry, are men employed in or about their prisons.

The *Century Magazine* of 1888–89 contains a series of articles on Siberian prisons by a Mr. George Kennan. Space will not permit of my discussing these further than as regards Tomsk prison. This is described, if I remember rightly, as being totally unfit for human habitation, a hot-bed of filth and disease, vice and immorality, engendered by the indiscriminate herding together, night and day, of men, women, and children. Upon the same writer's version of the treatment of prisoners I will not comment, having, in this letter, confined myself strictly to facts that have come under my own personal notice. As an Englishman, however, and consequently an unbiased observer, I venture to hope that my evidence will gain [in England at least] the credence that has been given to that of Mr. Kennan, an American journalist. Judging from the present state of things, I can only presume that a radical reform has taken place since that gentleman's visit and subsequent publications. If so, the Russian Government has indeed vindicated its evil reputation for procrastination. Be this as it may, Mr. Kennan will doubtless be glad to hear that the Tomsk prison, as graphically described in the pages of the *Century Magazine*, does not exist.

Sensational accounts of Siberian atrocities appear almost monthly in the newspapers. The English press, with few exceptions, sides with the "oppressed exile," and publishes with avidity every canard floated at New York or Geneva by the friends of political prisoners. Concerning the latter, I cannot as yet express an opinion; but in the face of what I have seen to-day, is it fair to believe implicitly all that we hear of the "diabolical cruelties" to criminal prisoners at Tomsk, Nertchinsk and Sakhalin?—*Pall Mall Gazette*, Sept. 24, 1890.

II

To the Editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette.*

Sir: In the number of the *Gazette* issued Wednesday, September 24, 1890, there appears a letter from Mr. H. De Windt, the explorer of the desert of Gobi, in which that gentleman describes a visit made by him to the Tomsk prison, in Western Siberia, and in which, referring to my Siberian investigations, he says, "Mr. Kennan will doubtless be glad to hear that the Tomsk prison, as graphically described in the pages of the *Century Magazine*, does not exist." Will you kindly grant me space enough to correct an error into which Mr. de Windt has inadvertently fallen? If the distinguished explorer will consult the latest report of the Russian prison administration, which is in print, and which may be obtained without difficulty, he will find that there are two prisons in the city of Tomsk, one called the "gubérnski," or provincial prison, and the other the "perisílni," or exile-forwarding prison. The former is used almost exclusively as a place of detention or confinement for local offenders, while the latter is the great forwarding depot through which pass all exiles and convicts destined for central and Eastern Siberia. The prison described by me in the *Century Magazine* is the exile forwarding-prison, which receives and despatches eastward from 10,000 to 12,000 criminals every year. The prison visited and described by Mr. de Windt is a mere place of confinement for local provincial offenders, and does not contain as many hundreds of inmates as the forwarding prison contains thousands. It is a remarkable and significant fact that whenever a badly informed and credulous traveler arrives in the Siberian city of Tomsk, and expresses a desire to inspect the Tomsk prison, he is conducted by the amiable officials, not to the exile-forwarding prison, which, perhaps, is the thing that he really wishes and means to see, but to the "gubérnski," or provincial prison, which is nothing more than a local gaol. This was the course pursued with the Rev. Henry Lansdell, and this seems to be the plan that was adopted by the Tomsk officials in their dealings with Mr. de Windt. If either of these gentlemen, however, had taken the trouble to make even the most superficial inquiry in the city, outside the circle of the officials, he would have been made acquainted with the distinction between the city gaol and the forwarding prison, and would doubtless have asked to see the latter.

Mr. de Windt declares positively that the "Tomsk prison, as graphically described in the pages of the *Century Magazine*, does not exist." His letter bears the somewhat vague date "Tomsk, September," without specification of day or year, but from internal evidence it appears that it was written in September, 1889. On the 3d of that same month and year the *Russian Gazette*, one of the strongest and most influential newspapers in Moscow, devoted a long editorial to the condition of the Tomsk

forwarding prison in August, 1889, as shown by an article then just published in the Tomsk *Siberian Messenger*. At that time — not more than four weeks before Mr. de Windt wrote his letter — the Tomsk forwarding prison was not only in existence, but was in even a worse condition than that described in my article in the *Century*. According to the Tomsk *Siberian Messenger* — a conservative paper favored by the Government, and edited, moreover, under the strictest local censorship — the number of exiles in the forwarding prison at that time was "more than 4000" with a "prospect of 7000 in the near future"; and this in buildings that, according to the admission of Mr. Petukhóf, the acting-governor of the province, were intended to hold only 1400. "It is evident," the Tomsk newspaper says, "that the prison is threatened with the outbreak of all sorts of diseases, which will spread to the city, and bring terrible suffering upon its inhabitants. What is going on, meanwhile, in this place of confinement can be imagined only by one who has witnessed personally the picture that it presents of overcrowding breathlessness and literal suffocation. [*Russian Gazette*, No. 231, Moscow, September 3, 1889.]

This article from the Tomsk *Siberian Messenger* must have been in print, and known to every intelligent citizen of Tomsk, at the very time when Mr. de Windt was writing, in that city, a letter declaring positively that the prison described by me, and referred to by the *Siberian Messenger*, did not exist. Mr. de Windt closes his letter with the inquiry, "Is it fair to believe implicitly all that we hear of the diabolical cruelties to criminal prisoners at Tomsk . . . ?" I would respectfully inquire in turn, "Is it fair to deal with a great subject in this careless, superficial way, and then ask English readers to accept one's statements as based on real knowledge or thorough investigation?"

GEORGE KENNAN.

BOSTON, MASS., U. S. A., October 18, 1890.

— *Pall Mall Gazette*, November 4, 1890.

III

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Pall Mall Gazette*.

SIR: In a letter from Mr. George Kennan, the Siberian traveler, to the *Pall Mall Gazette* of November 4th, he says: "Kindly grant me space to correct an error into which Mr. de Windt has inadvertently fallen. He will find that there are two prisons in the city of Tomsk — one called the 'gubernski,' or provincial prison, and the other the 'perisylni,' or exile-forwarding prison. The former is used exclusively for local offenders, while the latter is the great forwarding depot through which pass all exiles destined for Central or Eastern Siberia. The prison described by me in the *Century Magazine* is the exile or forwarding prison; the prison visited and described by Mr. de Windt is a mere place of confinement for

local offenders." Mr. Kennan concludes: "When a badly informed or credulous traveler arrives he is conducted, not to the forwarding prison, but to the gubernski," inferring, apparently, that the latter prison is the only one I saw. Allow me to suggest that it is Mr. Kennan who, to quote his own words, has "made superficial inquiries and been badly informed." He would otherwise be aware of the fact that there are not two but *three* prisons in Tomsk — the "Gubernski," the "Perisylni," and the "Arrestantski"; all of which I visited as lately as last August. The former I have already briefly described in your journal and others. An account of the two latter would have been too voluminous for a newspaper, but will appear in my forthcoming work on the prisons of Western Siberia. I may add that I devoted three whole days to a minute inspection of the "Perisylni," or exile prison (which your correspondent described, and, somewhat rashly, assumes I did not enter), but entirely failed to recognize it from the ghastly descriptions in the *Century Magazine.*

I can quite understand this gentleman's reluctance to admit any facts but his own (English travelers are unfortunately rare in Tomsk), but that such an authority on Siberia as Mr. George Kennan should have been, up till now, unaware of even the existence of one of its largest prisons seems almost incredible. It may, or may not, interest him to hear that I this year visited the famous Tiumen prison (the horrors of which he has so graphically described), and traveled for nearly a fortnight down the river Obi in a convict barge, containing over six hundred exiles, to whom I was allowed free access, unaccompanied by officials.

I will not trespass further upon your valuable space, for this subject has already been discussed *ad nauseam* in the English press. Let me, however, assure Mr. Kennan that, in so far as he and his allegations against the Russian Government are concerned, I intend, in my work, to deal with this subject in anything but a "careless or superficial" way.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

H. DE WINDT.

BERLIN, Nov. 6, 1890.

— *Pall Mall Gazette*, Nov. 13, 1890.

IV

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Pall Mall Gazette.*

SIR: I beg pardon for trespassing again upon your space and courtesy, but it seems necessary to say a few words in reply to Mr. de Windt's letter from Berlin concerning the Tomsk prisons.

1. If, *at the time when the distinguished explorer wrote the letter* that appeared in the *Gazette* of September 24, 1890, he was not aware of the existence of the Tomsk Forwarding Prison, his investigation, certainly, was a very careless and superficial one. If, on the other hand, he *was*

aware of its existence, his declaration that the "Tomsk prison, as graphically described in the pages of the *Century Magazine*, does not exist" was deceptive and misleading, and his whole letter was disingenuous. His apparent attempt to evade this dilemma by retorting that I, myself, was ignorant of the existence of a third prison in Tomsk—namely the "Arrestántski," or "Arrestántski Otdyellénie"—only furnishes another proof of the careless way in which he investigates. If he will do me the honor to read—or perhaps read again—the *Century* article that he criticizes, he will find, on page 873, a reference to this very same "Arrestántski" prison of whose existence he thinks I have been "up till now" unaware. If he will take the further trouble to consult the last published report of the Russian prison administration, he will find that the "Arrestántski" is not "one of its [Siberia's] largest prisons," as he declares it to be, but rather a prison of the fourth or fifth class, through which there passed, in 1888, only about 200 criminals [Rep. of the Russ. Pris. Adm., p. 43, Ministry of the Interior, St. Petersburg, 1890]. Through each of Siberia's "largest prisons," properly so called, there passed, in the same period, from 14,000 to 19,000 suspects, exiles and convicts. [Same Report, pp. 136–137.] The size of the "Arrestántski" prison is not a matter of much importance, but why not describe it accurately, and why not read with attention the literature of one's subject, or at least the statements that one pretends to criticize?

2. Mr. de Windt makes no reply to the facts that I set forth in my previous letter with regard to the overcrowding of the Tomsk forwarding prison in August, 1889, and I presume, from his silence, that he is reserving them for discussion in the "forthcoming work" which is to deal with me and my "allegations against the Russian Government in anything but a careless and superficial way." While awaiting the appearance of this more thorough and accurate piece of work, I beg to submit, for Mr. de Windt's consideration, a few facts with regard to the sanitary condition of the Tomsk prisons as shown by recent official reports. In the year 1887 there passed through the Tomsk city prisons [not including the forwarding prison] 1089 offenders. Of this number 212, or 19.5 per cent., became so seriously ill while in prison as to require hospital treatment. Typhus fever—a preventable filth-disease—constituted 62 per cent. of the whole aggregate of prison sickness. [Rep. of Russ. Pris. Adm. for 1887, pp. 314 and 317, Ministry of the Interior, St. Petersburg, 1889.] In 1886, which is nearer the time to which my investigations relate, the sick in these same prisons constituted 35.2 per cent. of the whole number of prisoners. [Same Rep., p. 315.] In 1887 the proportion of sick prisoners to the whole number that passed through the six prisons "of general type" in the province of Tomsk was more than 37 per cent. [Same Rep., p. 306.] In 1884, the year before I went to Siberia, there were in the prisons of the province of Tomsk three hospitals with 230 beds. In these three prison hospitals there were treated that year 1514 prisoners, of whom 259,

or more than 16 per cent., died. [Rep. of Russ. Med. Dept. for 1884. *Eastern Review* of St. Petersburg, No. 50, Dec. 17, 1887, p. 3. In 1885, the year of my visit to Siberia, the sick-rate in the prisons of Tomsk was more than 42 per cent. [Rep. of Russ. Pris. Adm. for 1885, *Eastern Review* of St. Petersburg, No. 50, Dec. 17, 1887, p. 3.] In 1887, according to the report of the Russian Medical Department for that year, the hospital of the Tomsk Forwarding Prison contained 276 beds. As the fall advanced and the prison became more and more overcrowded, the number of the sick, which even before that time had exceeded the capacity of the hospital, rose to 520. The beds were then taken out and the sick were laid on the floor. Still there was not room for them all, and many were left in the overcrowded cells where they spread infection among the well, and especially among the children. [Rep. of Russ. Med. Dept. for 1887, pp. 201–207. Ministry of the Interior, St. Petersburg, 1889.]

Perhaps Mr. de Windt, in his "forthcoming work," after dealing suitably with me and my "allegations," will kindly explain how it happens that in prisons which he describes as "clean and well conducted" typhus fever constitutes 62 per cent. of the whole aggregate of disease, and why it is that prisoners who, he says, are "kindly treated and well cared for" ungratefully fall sick at the rate of 19 to 42 per cent., and then die at the rate of 16 per cent. When he has made this explanation, I shall be greatly obliged to him if he will point out to me the page and paragraph where, in describing the prisons he has seen, I used the words "hells upon earth," which he puts into quotation marks and seems to attribute to me.

—[*Daily News*, Nov. 13, 1890.] GEORGE KENNAN.

NEW YORK CITY, U. S. A., Nov. 30, 1890.

— *Pall Mall Gazette*, Dec. 16, 1890.

My own description of the Tomsk forwarding prison is so completely sustained at every point by the Russian official reports, that it is perhaps unnecessary to append further references and quotations; but Mr. de Windt seems disposed to make this a test case of trustworthiness, and, so far as I am concerned, I am perfectly willing to treat it as such.

At the time of my visit to the prison in question there were in the city of Tomsk two newspapers — one, the *Siberian Gazette*, a liberal periodical, edited by the well-known Russian anthropologist and archæologist, Mr. A. Adriánof, and the other, the *Siberian Messenger*, a more conservative journal, edited and published by Mr. V. Kartamíshef. Both of these papers were under the strictest local censorship, and the censor was State Councilor Nathaniel Petukhóf, vice-governor of the province. Such being the case, it is obvious that neither of these journals would be

allowed to publish false information with regard to the administration of provincial affairs, and that the censor, who was at the same time the acting-governor, would unhesitatingly cross out any description of the Tomsk forwarding prison that, in his judgment, was exaggerated, or unduly pessimistic. Let us see, then, what the acting-governor of the province allowed the Tomsk newspapers to say about this great exile-forwarding depot the same fall that I visited it and wrote the "ghastly descriptions," from which Mr. de Windt says he entirely failed to recognize the prison described. Under the heading "City News," the *Siberian Gazette* referred to the overcrowding of the prison in question as follows:

> The excessively large number of exiles lately received has compelled the local authorities to put them not only into the forwarding prison, where on the 1st of October there were 2140 prisoners [not counting the sick], but also into the prison castle where at the same time there were 1120, and even into the building of the "convict company" [arrestántski rót], to which were sent 120 families. The sick were housed in the forwarding prison, where there were more than 300, and in the prison castle, where there were 80. During the month of October the number of exiles increased to 3400, of whom 2400 were confined in the forwarding prison. This prison was built to accommodate only 1200 persons, and its capacity is now even less than that, owing to the fact that three out of the eleven prison buildings have been given up to the sick. The overcrowding of the hospital is already so great that the surgeon can receive no more patients, and the sick must be left in the same cells with those that are yet well. This state of things bears very heavily upon the children.
>
> —*Siberian Gazette*, No. 42, Tomsk, Oct. 20, 1885, p. 1114.

The editors of the two Tomsk newspapers were so opposed to each other in character, temperament, and journalistic policy, and were, moreover, on such hostile terms personally, that they would not speak to each other when they met accidentally in my room. Nevertheless, in their opinion of the Tomsk forwarding prison they heartily coincided, and the conservative, Government-favored paper, having less to fear, was much more bold and uncompromising in the expression of its views than was the humane and liberal journal of Mr. Adriánof. Four days after the appearance of the above-quoted paragraph in the *Gazette*, the *Messenger*, in a leading editorial on the same subject, said, "A month has now elapsed since the suspension of the movement of exile parties from Tomsk into Eastern Siberia. This intermission, which is customary and is due

to the breaking up of the roads by autumnal storms, has caused a particularly large accumulation of exiles this year in the Tomsk forwarding prison, and has had an extremely unfavorable influence upon its sanitary condition. Notwithstanding the removal of 700 exiles to the prison castle, and 200 to the building of the reform section, there are still more than 2400 in the forwarding prison, including 400 sick. It can be imagined how 2000 persons are crowded when they are put into eight one-story buildings, each thirty fathoms long and containing eighty-six cubic fathoms of air space, and all together intended to accommodate only 1200 to 1400 souls. The hospital is still more overcrowded. With a normal capacity of 150 it now contains 400 sick prisoners, who are lying side by side on the floor, between the beds, and in all the corridors and passages. Many of them are not only without mattresses but without bedding of any kind. To this must be added, moreover, the fact that the surgeon sends to the hospital only prisoners who are so seriously ill that their well comrades have to carry them. Those who are still able to walk — although they may be in the incipient stages of typhus fever or some other disease — are left in their cells, simply because there is no possibility of accommodating all of the sick in the hospital. The overcrowding is already so great that the surgeon, in order to gain room, has been forced to remove all the beds from one ward and put the sick on the floor. The rate of mortality is very high, and Dr. Órzheshko[1] says that the deaths for October will probably reach 100. Typhus is the predominating disease, but it is accompanied by smallpox, diphtheria, measles, and scarlatina. Cases are not rare in which prisoners have typhus fever twice in succession; and children have been known to take the infection first of typhus, then of smallpox, and finally of diphtheria or scarlatina. Contagion has saturated all the walls of the prison, and the harvest of death is reaped without mercy."

In another part of the same paper the feuilletonist said:

The Tomsk forwarding prison is a great nursery of contagious diseases. Typhus, of all sorts and species, smallpox, scarlet fever, and diphtheria, breed there so abundantly, and in such luxuriant forms, that it is a matter for surprise that we all — citizens of Tomsk — are not lying in the peaceful "God's Acre" that separates the city from this anti-sanitary station. The prison increases by one hundred per cent. the city's mortality, and gives Tomsk the reputation of killing her people without pity. From

[1] The prison surgeon.

the beginning of May to the end of September, every year, there are sent from Tiumén to Tomsk floating prisons known as "barges," or "typhus-carriers," and they bring to us, with unfailing promptness and regularity, the most perfect specimens of typhus that exist. In a nursery of contagious diseases that was built to accommodate 1600, but that holds, when necessary, just twice that number, these typhus specimens develop, of course, most satisfactorily. In the early spring this disease-nursery is not a nursery at all, it is a prison of the most common kind, and empty at that; but no sooner does spring wave her perfumed wings — no sooner is the whistle of the steamer heard on the river — than the nursery begins to receive the necessary material — the prison becomes reanimated. Week after week its population increases, and week after week its hospital, built to hold 150 patients, fills up. The more people there are in the prison, the more go into the hospital, until, at last, towards the end of September, when the steamers cease to whistle and the season of raw and cold weather comes on, this place of grief and lamentation appears in its true character as an anti-sanitary station and a nursery of contagious diseases. The prisoners' cells, crammed to suffocation, furnish precisely the environment that is needed for the perfect development of the charming little creatures that the microscope has rendered visible. They develop without delay, and tens of prisoners go every day to the hospital. The latter contains 150 beds, and there are 400 sick. In order to accommodate them all it is necessary to remove the beds and lay the patients on the floor. Some of them have to lie there without anything under them, because, for a quarter of them — that is, for 100 persons — there is not even bedding. . . . Imagine if you can this picture: You enter a large log building, through a very small entry or hall, and find yourself, at once, in a room filled with people lying on the floor. The gray mass is sighing, groaning, shrieking in delirium, and slowly suffocating in the oppressive, foul-smelling air. And this is called a hospital! There are women with little babies — a mother sick with typhus fever and her infant with small-pox or scarlatina. Good God! is it possible that all this *must* be so — that it *cannot* be otherwise? These little children are not exiled by sentence of a court or "by the will of the commune"— these unfortunate wives are going into exile voluntarily with their unfortunate husbands. For what crime should they bear such suffering, and why should so many of them have to lay their bones in the earth of Tomsk? Year after year all this is repeated over and over again. In the city of Tomsk 50 persons out of every 1000 die in the course of a year. In the forwarding prison 100 persons out of every 1000 die in the course of four months. For ten years past it has been demonstrated, and admitted, that the forwarding of exiles must be differently managed, or the prison must be enlarged. Hundreds of times it has been said, and written, that such a hospital kills people instead of curing them — and still everything goes on as of old, and the disease-nursery continues to turn out more and more complicated and

interesting forms of physical disorder. When will all the papers be written that it is necessary to write, in order that, at last, the thing may be done that it is necessary to do?— *Siberian Messenger*, No. 24, Tomsk, Oct. 24, 1885, pp. 1 and 14.

Such is the account of the Tomsk forwarding prison that is given by the Tomsk press, and approved for publication by the acting-governor of the province of Tomsk. It seems to me to be much more nearly in harmony with my "ghastly descriptions" than with Mr. de Windt's "light, spacious, well-ventilated corridors"; cells equal to those of any prison in Europe; "perfect sanitary arrangements"; "convalescents in warm, white flannel dressing-gowns"; and "light, cheerful rooms, iron bedsteads, white sheets, and scrupulous cleanliness, that would have done credit to a London or Paris hospital."

It may, perhaps, be thought that between the time when I saw this prison and the time when Mr. de Windt "entirely failed to recognize it" from my "ghastly descriptions" something had been done by the authorities to greatly change its aspect, if not wholly to transform it, but I regret to say that such is not the case. Year after year I find in the Siberian newspapers, or in the official reports of the prison administration and the medical department, the same old melancholy story. In October, 1886,— one year later than the time to which the above extracts refer,— the *Siberian Gazette*, with the approval of the vice-governor of Tomsk, published, under the heading "City News," the following brief but significant paragraph:

Dr. Órzheshko[1] informs us that the forwarding prison, at the present time, is filled to overflowing with the sick. They number 340, and the majority of them have typhus fever. Dr. Órzheshko's assistant, Dr. Hermanof, has taken the infection and is also down with typhus. Among the children of the exiles diphtheria prevails to a terrible extent, and in its most virulent form. The mortality is enormous. In view of the fact that the forwarding prison has become the home of contagious diseases, and will not soon be free from them, all possible measures should be taken to prevent the spread of such diseases from the prison to the city.— *Siberian Gazette*, No. 42, Tomsk, Oct. 19, 1886, p. 1172.

The next year is 1887, for which we have the report of the Russian medical department on "The Sanitary Condition of Prisons."

[1] The chief surgeon of the Tomsk forwarding prison.

From this official report it appears that in the fall of 1887 there were 3000 exiles in the Tomsk forwarding prison, with adequate room for less than 1500; that 520 of them were sick at one time, with hospital beds for only 276; that most of the patients lay on the hospital floor as usual; and that a large number of sick, for whom there was not even hospital-floor space, remained in the prison *kámeras*, spreading infection among the well, and particularly among the children.[1]

The prison, apparently, was not so changed and improved as to be unrecognizable in 1888, for the chief of the prison administration reported, at the end of that year, that 2059 exiles had gone into the prison hospital, and that 24 per cent. of them were sick with typhus fever. [Rep. of Pris. Adm. for 1888, pp. 55 and 293. Ministry of Interior, St. Petersburg, 1890.] There had evidently been no change in the prison buildings, for the *Siberian Messenger* declared, at the end of the year, that

> most of the *kámeras* in the forwarding prison . . . are impossibly cold, damp and dark, and are more like stalls in a barn than human habitations. It is time, at last, that some attention were paid to this state of things. . . . The bad construction of the *kámeras* is one of the principal reasons for the great amount of sickness among the prisoners. It is well known that typhus fever and other diseases prevail there without intermission. —*Russian Gazette*, No. 28, Moscow, Jan. 28, 1889.

There is some uncertainty as to the time when Mr. de Windt *first* visited the Tomsk forwarding prison and failed to recognize it from my description; but the exact time does not matter, since there is plenty of evidence to show that, when he wrote his letters to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the Tomsk forwarding prison was still the same institution that the Tomsk *Messenger* called a "nursery of contagious diseases," and that acting-Governor Petukhóf described to me as "the worst prison in Siberia." In my first letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette* [p. 513 of this appendix] I quoted the statements of the *Siberian Messenger* with regard to the terrible condition of affairs in the forwarding prison in August, 1889. In 1890—last year—Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, chief of the Russian prison administration, published a review of the operations of his department, for the first decade of its existence, and caused it to be translated into French for the information of the dele-

[1] Rep. of the Med. Dept., pp. 201–207. Ministry of the Interior, St. Petersburg, 1889.

gates to the St. Petersburg meeting of the International Prison Congress. In this review he refers cautiously to the Tomsk forwarding prison as follows:

Le dépôt de transfert de Tomsk contient, à la fin de la période de navigation 3000 détenus environ, quoique la contenance de cet établissement ne lui permette de donner place qu'à 1200 individus. Cela provient du fait que pendant cette période 500 à 600 détenus sont amenés chaque semaine à Tomsk sur les barques de service tandis que les détenus expédiés de cette ville par la route d'étape à pied ne dépassent pas le chiffre de 250-400 par semaine pendant l'été et 150 pendant l'hiver: ces chiffres dépendent du nombre des détachements d'escorte de la quantité d'emplacements libres dans des bâtiments d'étape et dans les prisons d'Atchinsk et de Krasnoïarsk. Ainsi, sur chacun des 18 convois de détenus amenés sur des barques de Tumène à Tomsk, il reste dans le dépôt de cette dernière ville sans avoir été expédiés à destination, de 100 à 200 individus, ce qui pour la fin de la période de navigation en représente 3000 à 4000. Pour mettre fin à cet encumbrement excessif du dépôt de transfert de Tomsk ainsi que des dépôts de Krasnoïarsk, il a été élaboré à l'administration générale des prisons un projet, consistant à transporter les détenus de Tomsk à Irkoutsk sur des chariots à un cheval, au nombre de 250 individus par semaine. Avant de soumettre ce projet au conseil de l'Empire il a été demandé l'avis du ministre des Finances qui s'est prononcé dans un sens favorable à la combinaison.

— *Administration Générale des Prisons, Aperçu de son Activité pendant la Periode Décennale*, 1879–1889, *p.* 158, *St. Pétersbourg*, 1890.

The chief of the prison administration could hardly be expected, in a report intended for the International Prison Congress, to illustrate descriptively and pictorially the result of putting 3000 or 4000 prisoners into buildings intended for only 1200; but he admits the fact, and it now remains for Mr. de Windt to show in what respect my description of this prison is inconsistent with the facts set forth concurrently in the Siberian periodical press, in the reports of the prison administration, in the reports of the medical department, in the statements of the prison surgeon, and in the review prepared by Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy for the International Prison Congress. I trust that he will also explain why, in his first letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he described the Tomsk city gaol in such a way as to make it appear to be the exile-forwarding prison, and why he asserted, without hesitation or qualification, that "the Tomsk prison, as graphically described in the pages of the *Century Magazine*, does not exist."

APPENDIX F

CONDITION OF PRISONS

In this appendix will be found a few facts and statements concerning Siberian prisons, derived partly from Siberian newspapers and partly from official reports. It will be seen that they cover a series of years, both before and after my journey to Siberia, and that they relate to prisons in all parts of northern Asia from the mountains of the Urál to the mines of Karâ. Most of the articles quoted from Siberian periodicals were read and approved by the local press censors before they were published, many of them had express official sanction, and none of them, so far as I know, has ever been disputed or questioned in the newspaper where it originated. For greater convenience of reference I have arranged the statements and descriptions, so far as possible, in alphabetical order under the names of the prisons to which they relate.

THE ÁCHINSK PRISON.

The Áchinsk prison is a *cloaca*, where human beings perish like flies. Typhus fever, diphtheria, and other epidemic diseases prevail there constantly, and infect all who have the misfortune to get into that awful place. Not long ago a young girl — Miss Nikítina — [1] died there of typhus fever, and in that prison Mr. L——ko contracted the typhus from which he died in Krasnoyársk. — Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 1. Irkútsk, Jan. 1, 1885.

In the Áchinsk prison matters are still worse. There one doctor has on his hands more than 300 sick, in a small cramped hospital, and with a very limited number of attendants. What can one unfortunate doctor do in such circumstances?

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 3. St. Petersburg, Jan. 22, 1887.

[1] A political offender exiled by administrative process. Her story will be found in chapter XI, Vol. 1.

The hospital of the Áchinsk prison consists of three barracks, one for men one for women, and one for families. The first thing that astonishes you, as you enter the hospital building, is the intolerable [*oduráiushchaya* — literally "maddening"] stench, which makes an unaccustomed person sick at the stomach.[1] The wards are ventilated by means of holes pierced in the walls [and that in only a few of the rooms], but these holes are generally stuffed with rags by the patients themselves to prevent cold draughts. The water-closets are not only never disinfected, but never even ventilated; and the pools and masses of excrement on the floors show that they are rarely if ever cleaned. The sick have repeatedly begged the hospital administration to abate the stench, but without result. Insects of every possible kind are so abundant that they constitute the dominating population of the hospital, and the patients serve as their food. There are masses of filth under the beds, and the mattresses are so seldom changed that persons coming into the hospital for treatment frequently get at once two or three new diseases. The sick, for some reason, do not wear hospital garb, but go about in the common convict dress; and it is not unusual to see patients who have no shoes or slippers, and who are compelled to splash through the pools of the water-closet in their stocking-feet. The food is fairly satisfactory, although the meat is generally short in weight and the milk in measure. The number of attendants is so small that it is impossible for them properly to discharge their duties. One attendant, for example, has to look after sixty patients. The care of the sick is wholly inadequate, and after the evening "verification" [that is, in winter, after 4 P. M.], the doors are locked and the sick are left to care for themselves. No matter what may happen between that time and eight o'clock on the following morning, medical help cannot be had. The doctor's time is so occupied with private practice, and work in the city hospital, that he comes to the prison only once a day for an hour or two, while the hospital steward spends in the hospital only five or six hours a day. Such is our prison Bethesda.

—Áchinsk correspondence of the newspaper *Sibírskaya Gazéta*, No. 30. Tomsk, April 17, 1888.

With regard to the condition of the prison in Áchinsk, our correspondent writes us as follows: "As soon as you enter the courtyard of the prison you notice the contaminated, miasmatic air; but the principal source of the contamination is the water-closet in the small corridor at the entrance to the prison building. Dante himself would have thrown down his pen if he had been required to describe the damp, cold, dilapidated cells of this prison. At night myriads of bedbugs torture every prisoner

[1] When the governor-general passed through Áchinsk, the hospital administration had the wards thoroughly fumigated. [Editorial note.]

into a condition not far removed from frenzy. The prison sometimes has 600 inmates, and to its filth and disorder are attributable the typhus fever, diphtheria, and other diseases that spread from it, as from a pit of contagion, to the population of the city."

It is commonly said that European Russia has no prisons for criminals, and that it is necessary, therefore, to send the latter to Siberia; but the pictures drawn by our correspondents show what is the condition of the Siberian prisons to which these criminals are sent, and into which there are sometimes crammed more than 2000 exiles. Siberian prisons contaminate not only the Siberian air, but the morals of the Siberian people.

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 22, p. 4. St. Petersburg, June 2, 1883.

Typhus fever constituted 16.6 per cent. of all the sickness in the Áchinsk prison in 1886, and 10.8 per cent. in 1888.

— Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1886 and 1888, pp. 221 and 292.

If you once glance into the Áchinsk prison you will never forget it. I have seen many prisons and *étapes*, but not one worse than this. As you look at the prisoners in these *cloacæ*, you are simply astonished at the capacity of the human organism for endurance. When I said to the warden, "Why don't you try to clean your prison — at least a little?" he replied, "Gálkine Wrásskoy [the chief of the Russian prison administration] saw it all just as it is. The only way to make this prison endurable is to burn it down and build another — and where are you going to get the money?" There was nothing to be said after that.

— "Prisons and Etapes" by I. P. Belokónski. Orël, 1887.

THE BALAGÁNSK PRISON.

The Balagánsk prison is one of the oldest buildings in the city, and long ago fell into decay. Official correspondence has been in progress for many years with regard to the erection of a new prison, but it was not until recently that the sum of 19,000 *rúbles* was appropriated for the purpose, and the work of construction will not begin until spring. It is hard to understand how living human beings can continue to exist in the present prison ruins. There is no separate hospital connected with the prison, nor even an independent prisoners' kitchen; but in a small wing are the quarters of the warden, and there a room has been set apart for a hospital, and there, in the warden's kitchen, the prisoners do their cooking. You will find in the hospital neither dishes, nor utensils, nor linen in sufficient quantities, nor medicines. The food is scanty and bad. Meat is hardly given to the prisoners at all, and the bread is of such quality that, to adopt the words of a director of the prison committee

who recently visited the prison, "it is doubtful whether pigs would eat it."

— Balagánsk correspondence of newspaper *Sibírskaya Gazéta*, No. 42, pp. 1119-1120. Tomsk, Oct. 20, 1885.

Scurvy constituted 28.4 per cent. of all the sickness in the Balagánsk prison in 1888. — Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1888, p. 293.

THE BARNAÜL PRISON.

All sorts of disorders and irregularities are reported in the Barnaül prison, including drunkenness, fraud, embezzlement, counterfeiting [the tools and materials for which were furnished to the prisoners by the police], and murder.

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 12, p. 9. St. Petersburg, June 17, 1882.

Scurvy constituted 14.5 per cent. of all the sickness in the Barnaül prison in 1886. — Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1886, p. 223.

THE BIRUSÍNSKI ÉTAPE.

Typhus fever constituted 15.2 per cent. of all the sickness in the Birusínski *étape* in 1886, 17.5 per cent. in 1887, and 43 per cent. in 1888.

— Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 222, 316, and 293.

THE CHEREMKHÓFSKI PRISON.

The condition of the Cheremkhófski prison is described to us by an eye-witness as something terrible. In four small cells [which do not contain, all together, more than 1700 cubic feet of air] there are packed thirty prisoners, including five or six women — one of them decrepit — and a baby.[1] The cells are foul and stinking; the floors, in many places, have rotted and given way; and the sleeping-platforms are dirty and broken. Fleas and bedbugs are there in myriads, and, to use the expression of one of the prisoners, "they just regularly drink blood." No clothing is furnished, and some of the prisoners have nothing to wear but the shirts in which they were arrested. In short, it is impossible to describe all that one can see. "This is a grave and not a prison," said one young

[1] According to Prof. Huxley the air space required by one adult human being is 800 cubic feet. The 1700 cubic feet in the Cheremkhófski prison, therefore, would have been adequate for two prisoners only. In private residences in Russia, the air space regarded as essential for one grown person is a little more than the whole amount of air space available in the Cheremkhófski prison for thirty persons. [See magazine *Rússkaya Mísl.*, p. 61. Moscow, May, 1891.] [Author's note.]

prisoner, and he characterized it with perfect justice. It is said that the other district and village prisons are in a similar condition.

—Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 45, p. 10. Irkútsk, Nov. 3, 1885.

THE IRKÚTSK PRISONS.

The inmates of the Irkútsk prison castle have a very hard life—principally on account of the extremely limited space in the cells—but the people who deserve the most sympathy and pity are the exiles. In winter they accumulate in the forwarding prison in such numbers that very many of them have to sleep under the *nári*, on the cold, damp floor, and suffer incredible privations. Their unfortunate situation is made worse by the fact that they are not supplied with clothing, but have to wear such rags as they possess of their own. Many of them do not know what it is to have a change of under-clothing, and, generally speaking, they are in a state that would justify them in accusing Diogenes himself of living in luxury.

—Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 1, p. 3. Irkútsk, Jan. 1, 1884.

The Irkútsk forwarding prison was overcrowded to the extent of more than twice its normal capacity in 1887.

—"The Sanitary Condition of Prisons," Report of the Medical Department for 1887. Ministry of the Interior, St. Petersburg, 1889.

The following are the official statistics of sickness and mortality in all the "prisons of general type" in the province of Irkútsk for the years 1886, 1887, and 1888:

	1886.	1887.	1888.
Average daily number of prisoners	1335	1311	1280
Average daily number in hospital	212	192	160
Sick-rate—per cent.	15.8	14.6	12.5
Total number of deaths	56.	84.	90
Death-rate—per cent.	4.2	6.4	7.

—Rep's. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 10, 9, and 9.

The sick-rate in Belgian prisons is 2.7 per cent., and the death-rate 1.7 per cent. —Rep. of Lond. Meeting of Internatl. Pris. Cong., p. 78.

THE IRKÚTSK CITY PRISON.

The Irkútsk prison is a large brick building, two stories in height, with its front façade just opposite the long bridge over the brook Ushakófka. As you cross the bridge the building has quite a beautiful appearance, and the idea that it is a prison does not at first enter your head. But it

is not beautiful within. You enter the long vaulted gateway, and notice at once a heavy odor; but it is not very bad, as there is plenty of air. From this gateway there are two entrances; one, on the right, leading to the corps-de-garde, and the other, on the left, to the chapel and the hospital. From the latter comes the stench. Beyond these entrances there are more iron gates, and on the other side of them is the court. The court-yard is clean, but the odor in the cells is murderous. . . . On the left extends a low building with twelve or thirteen windows. In it are the secret *kámeras* where they keep particularly important criminals. Here it is comparatively clean and neat — better than in any other part of the prison, not excepting the so-called "office of the warden." The bath-house is too small for such a prison, where the number of prisoners sometimes reaches 2000, and the common cells and the hospital are incredibly dirty and stinking. —"Afar," by M. I. Orfánof, p. 216.

In the Irkútsk city prison, typhus fever constituted 11.8 per cent. of all the sickness in 1888. —Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1888, p. 292.

THE ISHÍM PRISON.

The Ishím correspondent of the newspaper *Sibír*, after referring to the murder of a prison inspector there by a prisoner, says: "It has long ceased to be news that the prisons in Siberia are hot-beds not only of moral but of physical contagion. And it is not surprising that they should be such. Not long ago I happened to meet, in a temperature of forty degrees below zero [Reaum.], a whole party of exiles clothed merely in *khaláts*, without warm overcoats or felt boots. Among them were many young children — also thus unprotected. In the rooms of the police station, to which the prisoners were taken, the coughing of the emaciated little ones was incessant. The consequences soon became apparent. Throat diseases began to prevail in the city among children, and typhus fever among adults. It is said that in one exile party that recently arrived here there were thirty typhus patients. The condition of the local prison, packed as it is with prisoners [there were recently 380 instead of 250 — the number for which it was designed], is not such as to lessen the severity of the epidemic. The city physician, Dr. V. S. Volashkévich, recently took there the infection of typhus, and died after a short illness.
—Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 11, p. 10. Irkútsk, March 10, 1885.

The sick-rate in the Ishím prison in 1884 was 39.7 per cent. [computed upon the whole number of prisoners]. It has not since been reported.
—Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1884, p. 217.

THE ISHÍM ÉTAPE.

Typhus fever constituted 55.2 per cent. of all the sickness in the Ishím *étape* in 1886, 50 per cent. in 1887, and 16.6 per cent. in 1888. — Rep's of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 222, 317, and 292.

THE KARÁ PRISONS.

Complaints come to us from Kará of the rough and inhuman treatment of convicts by the Cossacks of the prison guard. "Not long ago," writes one correspondent, "I myself saw a soldier knock a convict down without provocation, and then trample upon and kick him." Is not this barbarous treatment of convicts the reason for the constantly recurring disorders at Kará? — Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 26, p. 5. Irkútsk, June 23, 1885.

We learn from Kará that, as a result of the recently discovered abuses there, almost all of the old officials have been discharged and new ones put in their places. How much better the latter will be than the former, time will show.— Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 26, p. 5, Irkútsk, June 23, 1885.

Scurvy constituted 15 per cent. of all the sickness in the Lower Kará prisons in 1884. — Rep. of the Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1884, p. 222.

THE KÍRINSK PRISON.

The Kírinsk prison is a wooden building, surrounded by a stockade, and is everywhere supported, inside and outside, by log props, without which it would long ago have fallen down from sheer decay. At the time of my visit to the prison one of the prisoners thrust his finger out of sight into the rotten wood of one of the logs, in order to show us how old and decayed the walls were. This year the ceiling fell in one of the cells and buried the prisoner who occupied it; but he was taken out alive. The building is very cold, and can hardly be warmed on account of its old and decayed condition. . . . At the time of my visit it contained eighty-six prisoners, although it was built to hold not more than fifty at the utmost. . . . The warden complained that since September, 1882, the authorities in Irkútsk had sent him no clothing of any kind for the prisoners, so that the latter could not leave their cells to work, nor even go out of doors to take a walk. . . . One of the prisoners — a woman named Dolgopólova — complained to me that she had lain three years in this prison, waiting for her case to be tried by the Yakútsk circuit court. The male prisoners complained most of overcrowding. Many of them had to sleep not only on the floor, but under the *nári*. . . . There is no hospital in the prison, and sick prisoners are sent to the Kírinsk city

hospital, which, in point of incredible foulness and stench, is not paralleled by any similar institution, even in the most northerly and most remote towns of Siberia. The water-closet, evidently, is never cleaned, and liquids from it have run into the unwarmed corridor through which patients have to come to the closet, and have there frozen into a stratum of foul ice. Most of the sick lie on the floors, for want of cots, and lie so closely together that there is barely room to enter the *kámeras*. They all complained — and those lying on the floor complained with tears and lamentation — of the terrible cold in the *kámeras*, from which they were freezing without any means of covering themselves or getting warm. The temperature was really such as to necessitate a fur coat and cap. In one small separate cell lay two syphilitic patients — a man and a woman together, as there was no ward for women suffering from that disease — and on a pile of rags under a table in one corner of that same cell lay, cowering and getting behind each other, like puppies or kittens, two little children under three years of age belonging to the woman. The *isprávnik* explained that he had tried to make some other disposition of the children, in order to save them from infection ; but that none of the inhabitants of the town would take them.

Exile parties, upon their arrival in Kírinsk, stop in this prison and are put into the corridor, since there is no forwarding prison here, and all the cells are already full of prisoners awaiting trial or undergoing punishment. When I visited the prison on the 17th of February, it contained an exile party numbering 120 which had just arrived from Irkútsk. Among these exiles were seven dangerously sick with typhus, and three more or less frozen. As there was no room for them in the hospital, they were laid on the floor of the corridor, and on the benches or shelves of a little storeroom. On the march from Irkútsk, one exile had frozen to death. According to the statement of the warden, about one-tenth of all the exiles that come from Irkútsk arrive in Kírinsk without proper winter clothing, having sold their *khaláts* and *shúbas*, either for intoxicating liquor or for food. Some justify themselves for so doing by saying that they receive only fourteen *kopéks* a day for their subsistence, that black rye bread sometimes costs there nine or ten *kopéks* a pound, and that they are forced to sell their outer garments in order to get enough to eat.

—" The Prisons of the Lena Region," by Vladímir Ptítsin. In magazine *Séiverni Véstnik*, St. Petersburg, December, 1889.

THE KRASNOYÁRSK PRISON.

Every year, at the time of the autumnal ice-run in the Yeniséi River, the forwarding prison and the *ostróg* become overcrowded with prisoners. Last fall they contained 2000 persons, although intended for only 600. One can imagine what takes place in prisons thus overcrowded — the ter-

rible suffocation, the filth, the dampness, etc. The prisoners have no laundry, and therefore they either wash their underclothing in their cells, or wear it for three or four weeks without washing. In the water-closets it is actually necessary to fight for a place, since for every such place there are a hundred or more prisoners. In view of these facts it is not surprising that the prison hospital now contains 200 patients sick with typhus in one form or another, and that twenty or thirty more are added daily to its lists. Even the prison attendants take the disease, and two overseers have already died of it. It is a matter for surprise that the prison authorities, with more than 300 sick on their hands, content themselves with the two prison doctors, instead of calling in outside physicians as they have done in previous years. However, in Áchinsk the condition of things is still worse. There they have only one prison doctor.

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 3, p. 6. St. Petersburg, Jan. 22, 1887.

Scurvy constituted 16.5 per cent. of all the sickness in the Krasnoyársk prison in 1886, 10.8 per cent. in 1887, and 11.6 per cent. in 1888. Typhus fever constituted 12.2 per cent. in the same prison in 1888.

— Rep's of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 222, 292, 293, and 317.

THE NÉRCHINSK PRISON.

The year 1884 has left Nérchinsk quite an inheritance of undesirable things, and among them contagious disease. Typhus fever, which first made its appearance in November, is now widely prevalent. The nursery of the contagion is that same old prison, famous for its filth, rottenness, and suffocating air. Four men died of typhus in it at the close of the year, and the overcrowding was such as to compel the authorities to remove all the women into another building hired for the purpose. From the prison and the prison hospital the disease was carried by the soldiers of the guard to the local command, where, out of twenty-five men sick, ten have typhus fever. The warden of the prison and the hospital steward are also down with the disease. General Barabásh, governor of the Trans-Baikál, inspected the prison on the 30th of December as he passed through here on his way to the Amúr, and was astounded by its hygienic condition.

— Newspaper *Sibírskaya Gazéta*, No. 7, p. 169. Tomsk, February 17, 1885.

Scurvy constituted 23.6 per cent. of all the sickness in the Nérchinsk prison in 1886. — Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1886, p. 223.

Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, chief of the Russian prison administration, finds the prisons at the Nérchinsk mines to be in bad condition, and the medical attendance deficient.

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 26, p. 2. St. Petersburg, September 23, 1882.

THE PERM FORWARDING PRISON.

The following are the official statistics of sickness and mortality in the Perm forwarding prison for the years 1886, 1887, and 1888.

	1886.	1887.	1888.
Average daily number of prisoners	345	280	306
Average daily number in hospital	59	37	47
Sick-rate — per cent	17.1	13.2	15.3
Total number of deaths	84	34	54
Death-rate — per cent	24.3	12.1	17.6

— Rep's of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 53, 53, and 55.

The sick-rate in Danish prisons ranges from 2.11 to 2.13 per cent., and the death-rate from 1.75 to 1.79 per cent.

— Rep. of Internatl. Pris. Cong., London meeting, p. 78.

THE SHERAGÚLSKI ÉTAPE.

Typhus fever constituted 35.7 per cent. of all the sickness in the Sheragúlski *étape* in 1886, 23.4 per cent in 1887, and 39.1 per cent. in 1888.

— Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 222, 317, and 293.

The *étapes*, with a few exceptions, are in an unsatisfactory condition, and some of them are in ruins. In the Sheragúlski *étape*, which has only two *kámeras* with thirty-six cubic fathoms of air space, there are crowded as many as fifty sick prisoners, of all ages and both sexes. They lie on the sleeping-platforms or under them as it may happen, and the stench in the *kámeras* is such that it can be borne with difficulty, even for a few moments. The grievously sick, for want of attendance, wallow on the floor in the midst of filth and evacuations from the bowels, and their clothes rot on their bodies. Still worse, according to the reports of the physicians, is the condition of the women that are compelled to give birth to children under the eyes of the male prisoners. The situation of the children themselves is also terrible.

—Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 26, p. 1. St. Petersburg, September 23, 1882.

THE TIRÉTSKI ÉTAPE.

Typhus fever constituted 26.5 per cent. of all the sickness in the Tirétski *étape* in 1886, 19 per cent. in 1887, and 32.9 per cent. in 1888.

— Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 223, 316, and 293.

THE TOBÓLSK PRISONS.

The following are the official statistics of sickness and mortality in all the "prisons of general type" in the province of Tobólsk for the years 1886, 1887, and 1888:

	1886.	1887.	1888.
Average daily number of prisoners	2178	2206	2273
Average daily number in hospital	264	215	212
Sick-rate — per cent.	12.1	9.7	9.3
Total number of deaths	227	265	246
Death-rate — per cent.	10.4	12.	10.8

—Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 23, 21, and 21.

The sick-rate in French prisons is from 4 to 5 per cent., and the death-rate from 3.6 to 3.8 per cent.

—Rep. of Internat'l Pris. Cong., London meeting, p. 79.

THE TOMSK PRISONS.

The following are the official statistics of sickness and mortality in all of the "prisons of general type" [not including the forwarding prison] in the province of Tomsk for the years 1886, 1887, and 1888:

	1886.	1887.	1888.
Average daily number of prisoners	1133	1122	1208
Average daily number in hospital	92	90	104
Sick-rate — per cent.	8.1	8.	8.6
Total number of deaths	42	48	52
Death-rate — per cent.	3.7	4.2	4.3

— Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 22, 22, and 21.

The sick-rate in Swedish prisons is from 4. to 4.10 per cent., and the death-rate from 2 to 3 per cent.

THE TOMSK FORWARDING PRISON.

The following are the official statistics of sickness and mortality in the Tomsk forwarding prison for the years 1886, 1887, and 1888:

	1886.	1887.	1888.
Average daily number of prisoners	1418	1491	1734
Average daily number in hospital	172	211	206
Sick-rate — per cent.	12.1	14.1	11.9
Total number of deaths	329	314	228
Death-rate — per cent.	23.2	21.	13.1

—Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 53, 53, and 55.

The death-rate among leased convicts in the Mississippi convict camps, between 1881 and 1885, ranged from 8.48 to 15.61 per cent. This is hardly more than half the death-rate of the Tomsk forwarding prison, and yet the *Memphis Commercial* says even such figures "tell the story of ill-usage, inhumanity, and brutal treatment."

—*Memphis Daily Commercial*, p. 1. Memphis, Tenn., July 27, 1890.

Typhus fever constituted 56.4 per cent. of all the sickness in the Tomsk forwarding prison in 1886, 62.6 per cent. in 1887, and 23.8 per cent. in 1888.

—Reps. of Chf. Pris. Dept. for years indicated, pp. 222, 317, and 293.

THE VÉRKHNI ÚDINSK PRISON.

Mr. M. I. Orfánof, a well-known Russian officer, who inspected the Vérkhni Údinsk prison at intervals for a number of years previous to our visit, has described it as follows:

The first prison in the Trans-Baikál is that of Vérkhni Údinsk. It stands on the outskirts of the town, on the steep high bank of the Selengá River. Over the edge of this bank, distant only five or six fathoms from the prison, are thrown all the prison filth and refuse, so that the first thing that you notice as you approach it, at any time except in winter, is an intolerable stench. The prison itself is an extremely old two-story log building intended to accommodate 140 prisoners. During my stay in Siberia I had occasion to visit it frequently. I never saw it when it held less than 500, and at times there were packed into it more than 800. I remember very well a visit that I once made to it with the governor of the Trans-Baikál. He arrived in winter and went to the prison early in the morning so that the outer door of the corridor was opened [for the

first time that day] in his presence. The stench that met him was so great that, in spite of his desire to conceal from the prisoners his recognition of the fact that their accommodations were worse than those provided for dogs, he could not at once enter the building. He ordered the opposite door to be thrown open, and did not himself enter until a strong wind had been blowing for some time through the prison. The first thing that he saw, in one corner of the corridor, was an overflowing *parásha* [excrement bucket] and through the ceiling was dripping filth from a similar *parásha* in the story above. In that corner of the corridor he found six men lying on the floor asleep. He was simply astounded. "How can people sleep," he exclaimed, "on this wet, foul floor, and under such insupportable conditions?" He shouted indignantly at the warden and other prison authorities, but he could change nothing.

—"Afar," by M. I. Orfánof, pp. 220 – 222. Moscow, 1883.

Scurvy constituted 13.7 per cent of all the sickness in the Vérkhni Údinsk prison in 1888.

—Rep. of Chf. Pris. Dept. for 1888, p. 293.

THE YENISÉISK PRISONS.

The following are the official statistics of sickness and mortality in all the prisons "of general type" in the province of Yeniséisk for the years 1886, 1887, and 1888.

	1886.	1887.	1888.
Average daily number of prisoners	1715	1877	2117
Average daily number in hospital	427	449	445
Sick-rate—per cent	24.9	23.9	21
Total number of deaths	247	231	205
Death-rate—per cent	14.4	12.3	9.6

—Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 9, 9, and 9.

Death-rate in railroad convict camps in North Carolina in 1879 and 1880 11.5 per cent.; in Texas convict camps 4.7 to 5.4 per cent.

—"The Convict Lease System in the Southern States," by George W. Cable, *Century Magazine*, vol. xxvii, p. 582.

PRISONS IN GENERAL.

A correspondent of the *Nóvoe Vrémya* reports that, notwithstanding the recent journey through Siberia of the chief of the prison administration, Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, the unsatisfactory condition of the prisons and of the exiles remains unchanged. The whole prison question, the

correspondent adds, resolves itself into a question of money. If money be forthcoming, prisons will be forthcoming.

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 16, p. 8. St. Petersburg, July 15, 1882.

The following incident has been related to us as characteristic of our Siberian methods. A young man [well known in St. Petersburg] of incorruptible honesty, who had just been graduated from the university, came to a certain East-Siberian town to act as district attorney. Soon after his arrival he happened to be called upon to take the place of the procureur, and, in pursuance of his duty, visited the prison. He noticed there various disorders which were of such a nature as to render the police-master and the prison warden liable to criminal prosecution, and upon these disorders he made a report. It was read before the prison committee and made a very unpleasant impression. The chairman even said that the author of such a report had best look for a place in some other province. The report had no influence upon the fortunes of the prisoners, or of the police, but it had important consequences for the author, who was at once accused by the police of "political untrustworthiness." "What an excellent way," our correspondent adds, "to get rid of zealous young men who insist upon an observance of the laws!"

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 37, p. 6. St. Petersburg, December 19, 1882.

— Newspaper *Éólos*. St. Petersburg, December 10, 1882.

— Newspaper *Sibír*, No. 5. Irkútsk, January 30, 1883.

Not long ago the newspapers published a statement with regard to the unsatisfactory condition of the East-Siberian prisons, and the disorders said to have been discovered therein. We are now assured that, up to the present time, no particular disorders have been discovered. We accept this assurance willingly, but we cannot forget the official reports that we have seen of the provincial governors describing the extremely lamentable condition of the prisons.

— Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 8, p. 7. St. Petersburg, May 20, 1882.

A few days ago the *Journal de St. Petersbourg* printed a notice of the journey through Siberia of Privy-councilor Gálkine Wrásskoy, chief of the prison administration. . . . We have received from a perfectly trustworthy source the following information with regard to the results of his observations. . . . . He inspected seven provincial, territorial, and district prisons, the convict prisons of Tobólsk and Alexándrofsk, the forwarding prisons of Tiumén, Tomsk, and Krasnoyársk, and seventy *étapes* and *polu-étapes*. We understand that they did not make upon him

a very satisfactory impression. In point of construction and maintenance the only prisons found to be tolerable were the provincial prisons of Irkútsk and Krasnoyársk, and the district prisons of Omsk and Kansk. The prisons of Tobólsk and Tomsk, it is said, were in an extremely neglected condition so far as repairs were concerned, and the latter furnished an illustration, in all respects, of the complete indifference of the provincial authorities. Money for the rebuilding of a number of district prisons in the province of Tomsk — in Marínsk, Káinsk, Barnaül, and Bíisk — was asked for and granted as long ago as 1874, but the actual work of reconstruction has not yet [in 1882] begun in a single one of those towns, and the contractors for the Marínsk and Káinsk prisons are insolvent. The Siberian forwarding prisons are all overcrowded, and those in Tiumén and Tomsk are filled with sick [typhus patients and others] who, for want of hospital accommodations, are left in the same *kámeras* with the prisoners that are well.[1]

— "The Journey of Privy-councilor Gálkine Wrásskoy through Siberia." Newspaper *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*, No. 26, p. 1. St. Petersburg, September 23, 1882.

Report of Mr. Gálkine Wrásskoy, chief of the prison administration, upon the condition of Russian prisons in 1881.

En l'absence de chiffres précis pour l'ensemble des prisons à l'époque dont nous parlons, on peut citer certaines données caractéristiques se rapportant à la fin de l'année 1881, sans oublier que ces données ont été recueillies après qu'avaient déjà été prises certaines mesures pour l'évacuation des lieux de detention, et par conséquent qu'elles répondent à une situation déjà améliorée par rapport à celle des années précédentes. Il en ressort que pour 76,090 places destinées aux détenus il y avait 94,796 de ceux-ci ; autrement dit, l'encombrement des prisons s'exprimait par une proportion de 19 per cent. par rapport au chiffre total des prisonniers, et par une proportion de plus que 24 per cent par rapport à la quantité effective des emplacements dans les prisons. Ces chiffres représentent une moyenne pour l'ensemble des lieux de détention ; si on entre dans le détail, on constate que, dans 15 gouvernements, pour une place réservée aux détenus, on trouvait de 1.5 à 2 de ces derniers ; dans 9 gouvernements, on en trouvait plus de 2, soit jusqu'à 2.7 ; dans un gouvernement, celui de Piotrokow, on en trouvait 5.2. . . . Les rapports des autorités locales et les comptes-rendus des agents du ministère chargés d'inspecter les établissements de détention, représentent l'état des prisons sous un jour très peu favorable. Indépendamment du fait que certaines prisons avaient été établies dans des maisons particuliéres louées à cet effet, lesquelles

[1] It will be remembered that the authorities in Irkútsk recently assured us, in print, that in Eastern Siberia no prison disorders whatever had been discovered. [Note of the editor of the *Vostóchnoe Obozrénie*.]

étaient mal adaptées et quelques-unes tout à fait impropres à cet usage, ou bien que d'autres étaient situées dans édifices appartenant à l'Etat mais aménagés pour des services tout différents — celles mêmes des prisons qui étaient construites spécialement, comme telles se faisaient remarquer, dans la majorité des cas, par leur état de vétusté, l'humidité qui y régnait, l'insuffisance de l'air et de la lumiére, le peu de commodité des arrangements intérieurs, et l'état affreux dans lequel étaient entretenus les lieux d'aisance. Certains édifices, à la lettre, offraient l'aspect de ruins; d'autres n'avaient pas d'enceinte extérieure manquaient de cuisines, de fours à pain, de bains, de bouanderies, de séchoirs, corps-de-garde caves et hangars. L'absence de locaux pour les ateliers etait un phénoméne presque général. Là même où autrefois avaient existé des ateliers, par exemple les ateliers de prisons des provinces de la Vistule; il fallait les fermer et les transformer en locaux d'habitation. Beaucoup de prisons manquaient de quartiers de femmes et de logements pour le personnel pénitentiaire.

— Administration Générale des Prisons, Apercu de son Activité pendant la Periode Décennale, 1879 – 1889, pp. 6 – 8. St. Pétersbourg, 1890.

In a review of the report from which the above extract has been made, the *Russian Gazette* of Moscow says: "Upon reviewing the operations of the chief prison administration for the past ten years, we must recognize the fact that, with unquestionably good intentions, it has not succeeded, up to the present time, in removing a single one of the crying evils of the exile system." — *Russian Gazette*, No. 234, p. 1. Moscow, July 25, 1889.

Statement of ex-Senator Grot, formerly president of the Russian prison council, with regard to the condition of Russian prisons.

. . . . The whole penitentiary question in Russia is in a state of transition and reform. It would be very difficult to furnish extended details of the actual condition of the prisons, especially as the old administration, in expectation of a reform whose commencement dates only from the year 1860, neither could nor would, in these latter years, put in operation any radical measures. All that I can say is that the state of our prisons is very bad. We have neither good prison structures, nor employés specially prepared for the prison service. The labor is imperfectly organized, and the greater part of the prisoners have nothing to do. Even the youths are not everywhere separated from the adult prisoners. It must be said, however, that in these later times the penitentiary question has great interest for the Russian public, and books begin to issue from the press relating to it.

— Letter to Mr. E. C. Wines, quoted in the second annual report of the U. S. Commissioner of Labor, p. 455, Washington, 1887.

In the annual report of the medical department of the Ministry of the Interior for 1884, the prisons and prison hospitals of Tomsk, Yeniséisk, and Irkútsk are referred to as follows:

From the reports of the medical administrations it is evident that the sanitary condition of many prisons, both in the provinces and in the territories, is extremely unsatisfactory. The majority of them are altogether too small for the number of prisoners usually contained in them. Many of them lack proper ventilation, have badly constructed retirades, or are situated on low, damp ground. The prisons in which the absence of favorable hygienic conditions is most marked are those situated in the provinces of . . . Yeniséisk, Irkútsk, and Tomsk, and in the territory of the Trans-Baikál. Many prison hospitals are not provided with proper hospital supplies or appliances, and are so small that they cannot accommodate all of the sick. In many prisons, moreover, there is no special medical staff.

— Rep. of Med. Dept. for 1884, Min. of the Int., St. Petersburg, 1886.

The following are the sick-rates in a number of Siberian prisons for the year 1884, since which time they have not been reported.[1]

Situation of Prison.	*Sick-rate, per cent.*	*Situation of Prison.*	*Sick-rate, per cent.*
Barnaül	37.1	Marínsk	11.9
Bíisk	37.9	Minusínsk	26.3
Ekaterínburg	26.3	Tára	48.1
Kamishlóva	21.2	Tiukalínsk	47
Kansk	43.1	Turínsk	21.7
Kuznétsk	52		

— Rep. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1884, pp. 216, 217.

The following are the sick-rates in the city prisons of Tomsk and Tobólsk for the years 1883–88 inclusive, computed upon the basis of the total annual number of prisoners.

	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.
Tomsk [per cent.]	20.7	23.5	42.6	35.2	10.3	8.3
Tobólsk [per cent.]	32.4	31	41.1	45.4	26.8	21.4

— Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for 1886, pp. 220, 221, and Reps. for 1887 and 1888, pp. 291 and 291.

In well-conducted European and American prisons such preventible diseases as typhus and scurvy have long been virtually un-

[1] The computation has been made upon the whole number of prisoners for the year, not upon the daily average number.

known. Both have prevailed to some extent in the convict camps of our Southern States, but I have failed to find any reference to them — at least in epidemic form — in the recent records of regularly organized prisons, either in western Europe or America. Both are common in Russian prisons from St. Petersburg to Kamchátka. Below will be found a statement of the proportion of these diseases to the whole aggregate of sickness in a number of Siberian prisons for a series of years. It is a very incomplete and unsatisfactory statement, for the reason that typhus and scurvy do not appear in the Russian official reports at all unless they constitute more than ten per cent. of the total amount of sickness, and I have been unable, therefore, to fill out the tables.

TYPHUS.

Place.	1884.	1886.	1887.	1888.
Áchinsk ..... per cent.....	..	16.6 ..	..	.. 10.8
Birusínski *étape* ..... "	..	15.2 ..	17.5 ..	43
Irbít ..... "	..	..	..	.. 12
Irkútsk..... "	..	..	..	.. 11.8
Ishím *étape* ..... "	..	55.2 ..	50 ..	16.6
Koliván ..... "	..	..	77.7 ..	
Krasnoyársk ..... "	..	..	..	.. 12.2
Marínsk ..... "	13.1 ..	..	..	
Perm ..... "	..	..	17.5 ..	
Sheragúlski *étape* ..... "	..	35.7 ..	23.4 ..	39.1
Tirétski *étape*.... ..... "	..	26.5 ..	19 ..	32.9
Tiumén ..... "	23.2 ..	10.9 ..	.	
Tomsk forwarding prison . "	..	56.4 ..	62.6 ..	23.8

— Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 222, 221, 316, and 292.

SCURVY.

Place.	1884.	1886.	1887.	1888.
Alexándrofsk per cent	13.2 ..	..	..	..
Balagánsk ... "	..	..	..	.. 28.4
Barnaül ..... "	..	14.5 ..	..	..
Chíta..... "	..	10.7 ..	..	..
Ekaterínburg . "	..	..	..	.. 15.7
Karáa [Lower] "	15 ..	..	..	..
Khabarófka .. "	22.8 ..	10.5 ..	20 .	
Krasnoyársk . "	16.5 .	10.8 ..	11.6 ..	
Nérchinsk .... "	23.6 ..	..	..	
Pavlodár. ... "	..	..	..	.. 15.7
Vérkhni Údinsk "	..	..	..	.. 13.7
Yakútsk ..... "	..	25 ..	..	.. 19.6

— Reps. of Chf. Pris. Adm. for years indicated, pp. 222, 222, 317, and 293.

IMPROVEMENTS AND AMELIORATIONS.

Below will be found references to all of the improvements and ameliorations in the condition of Siberian prisons and prisoners that I have been able to find in the reports of the prison administration for the years that have elapsed since my return from Siberia.[1]

Place.	*Nature of Improvement.*
ALEXÁNDROFSK . .	3500 *rúbles* appropriated in 1886 for new kitchen, bakery, and water-closet in Alexándrofsk central prison. Rep. p. 80.
ALEXÁNDROFSK . .	Erection of new forwarding prison begun in 1886 and finished in 1888. Reps. pp. 82 and 99.
BALAGÁNSK. . . .	15,000 *rúbles* appropriated for new prison in 1888. Rep. p. 84.
BÍISK	New prison finished in 1888. Rep. p. 99.
BLAGOVÉISHCHENSK.	New prison finished in 1886. Rep. p. 103.
IRKÚTSK.	25,000 *rúbles* appropriated in 1888 for new prison hospital. Rep. p. 84.
KHABARÓFKA . . .	New prison finished in 1886. Rep. p. 90.
KRASNOYÁRSK. . .	3000 *rúbles* appropriated in 1886 for capital repairs to the city prison. Rep. p. 86.
NERCHÍNSK. . . .	65,000 *rúbles* appropriated in 1886, 37,000 in 1887, and 55,000 in 1888, to continue work on new prisons at the Nérchinsk mines. Reps. pp. 79, 82, and 84.
NERCHÍNSK. . . .	New prison finished in 1888 at the Nérchinsk mine of Górni Zerentúi. Rep. p. 99.
PERM.	2000 *rúbles* appropriated in 1888 for the organization of a women's section in the Perm prison. Rep. p. 89.
TOBÓLSK.	A new palisade erected around the Tobólsk city prison. Rep. p. 88.
TOMSK [city] . . .	30,000 *rúbles* appropriated for the erection of hospital barracks in the Tomsk forwarding prison. Rep. p. 94.
TOMSK [province] .	1000 *rúbles* appropriated for repairs to the Suslèfski *étape* in 1886, and 5240 *rúbles* for the reconstruction of it in 1887. Reps. pp. 84 and 88. 1300 *rúbles* appropriated in 1888 for capital repairs to the Tiazhinski *polu-étape*. Rep. p. 91.

[1] The reports of the Russian prison administration are not published until two years or more after the time to which they relate, and the report for 1888, which appeared in 1890, is the last that I have received.

Place.	*Nature of Improvement.*
TRANS-BAIKÁL . . [territory]	4448 *rúbles* appropriated in 1886 for enlarging the Strétinsk *étape*. Rep. p. 84.
VÉRKHNI ÚDINSK .	New prison finished in 1886. Rep. p. 90.
YAKÚTSK [province]	33,000 *rúbles* appropriated in 1887 for the erection of *étapes* along the river Lena. Rep. p. 103.
YENISÉISK [province]	729 *rúbles* appropriated for a well at the Kozúlskaya *étape*. Rep. p. 80.

The most important works included in the above list are the new prisons at Vérkhni Údinsk and Górni Zerentúi. Unfortunately they were both unnecessarily expensive, and both, in my judgment, were erected in places where they were least needed. The prison buildings that were in most urgent need of enlargement or reconstruction, it seemed to me, were the forwarding prisons of Tiumén, Tomsk, and Áchinsk, the *étapes* between Tomsk and Irkútsk, and the *étape* lazarets of Birusínskaya, Tirétskaya, and Sheragúlskaya, which were not only shamefully overcrowded, but were literally hot-beds of virulent contagion. Nothing seems to have been done, however, since my return from Siberia, to relieve the terrible overcrowding of the prisons and *étapes* along the great Siberian road.

APPENDIX G

REPORTS OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF EASTERN SIBERIA TO THE TSAR

A PART of the first report of Governor-general Anúchin to the Tsar upon the state of affairs in Eastern Siberia. Delivered to Alexander II., in person, by Adjutant Kozéllo in December, 1880. From a "secret" copy.

During my journey to Irkútsk I inspected a great number of prison institutions, and I regret to have to say that, with the exception of the prison castles in Krasnoyársk and Irkútsk, they are all—that is district prisons, forwarding prisons, and *étapes*—in a lamentable condition. The state of the *étapes* in Eastern Siberia is particularly bad, and has already attracted the serious attention of the Minister of the Interior. Large sums of money have been spent in repairs upon them, and 250,000 *rúbles* have been appropriated recently for the erection of new *étapes* in the territory of the Trans-Baikál. I doubt, however, whether it will be possible to accomplish anything of serious importance without a change in the existing conditions. There is even danger that the new *étapes* in the territory of the Trans-Baikál will share the fate of the *étapes* in the provinces of Yeniséisk and Irkútsk. The reason for this is the lack of technical experts. In the whole of Eastern Siberia, notwithstanding its great distances and enormous area, the civil lists provide for only seventeen architects and architect's assistants. And even this number is greater than that of the persons actually so employed, because, on account of the inadequate compensation received by technical experts here and the ease with which they can find profitable work in European Russia, they are reluctant to come to remote Siberia and enter a service which promises only material and moral privations. Such being the case, most Government buildings here are erected under a technical supervision which is nothing more than nominal. In reality they are built by contractors without any supervision whatever. For example: it is the intention of the Government to erect in the Trans-Baikál territory in 1881 thirty-one *étapes* and *polu-étapes*, which will be scattered over a distance of 1043 *versts*. This work is to be done under the supervision of a single archi-

tect, who, moreover, is burdened with the responsibility for an expensive new prison in the town of Vérkhni Údinsk, as well as for all other architectural work in a territory having an area of 547,965 square *versts*. It is manifest that one architect cannot cope with this amount of work; and the lack of technical supervision, by affecting disadvantageously the durability of the structures, results in the necessity for speedy repairs. In order to avoid these difficulties—the removal of which is beyond the limits of my power, but the responsibility for which rests on the local Siberian administration—I made a proposition to the Minister of the Interior to increase the salaries of the technical experts for whom provision is made in the East-Siberian civil lists.[1] I do not ask for an increase in the number of officers provided for in the civil lists, but only for an increase in their salaries; and I do this in the hope that I shall thus attract hither a class of officers for whom there are always vacancies. I estimate at 9190 *rúbles* the increase of expenditure that this will necessitate. It will be far more economical for the imperial treasury to authorize this increased annual outlay than to spend a large amount at one time on badly constructed buildings. The losses that result every year from the bad construction of Government buildings in Eastern Siberia is incomparably greater than the amount of the proposed new expenditure. If the latter be authorized, it will at least be possible, on the one hand, to have in Eastern Siberia the necessary number of technologic officers, and on the other to make the local authorities responsible for the proper use of the building appropriations.[2]

A part of the second report of Governor-general Anúchin to the Tsar upon the state of affairs in Eastern Siberia. Delivered to Alexander III. in March, 1882. From a "secret" copy.[3]

[1] Marginal note in the handwriting of the Tsar: "What has hindered this?" *i. e.* Why has this not been done?

[2] This report was written and delivered to the Tsar in 1880. Four years later the petty question of appropriating 9190 *rúbles* to increase the salaries of Government architects in Eastern Siberia had not even reached the stage of consideration in the Council of the Empire. The appropriation was trifling in amount [about $4600]; it was urged by the governor-general; the Tsar himself wanted to know why it had not been made; nobody, apparently, had any objection to it; and yet it was impossible to get the proposed reform under way. Governor-general Anúchin finished his term of service in Eastern Siberia and returned to European Russia without having seen this thing done. One of the advantages of an autocratic and despotic form of government is supposed to be the promptness with which a desirable change can be effected, but I doubt whether there is a country on the globe in which it is more difficult to get a certain class of useful things done than in Russia. If the thing that would be useful to the people promises to be profitable also to the high officials of the bureaucracy, it can be brought about in twenty-four hours; but if it be a measure of administrative economy, a a scheme to secure impartial justice, or humanitarian reform, it may languish in obscurity for twenty-four years.

[3] This report was in my possession only a short time, and I was compelled to make the following translation very hurriedly. It is not as smooth and idiomatic in construction, therefore, as I could wish, but it

Siberia has served for a long time as a place to which are sent, from all parts of the empire, the more heinous class of criminals, who have been sentenced to penal servitude, forced colonization, or banishment. In addition to these criminals, there are sent to Siberia persons turned over by communes to the disposition of the Government, and persons who have been imprisoned for crime and whom the communes will not afterward receive. Hard-labor convicts and forced colonists are sent to Eastern Siberia exclusively. Communal exiles go thither in very small numbers. Penal servitude is centralized in the Alexandrófski prison near Irkútsk, at Karáa in the territory of the Trans-Baikál, and on the island of Saghalín. Small gangs of hard-labor convicts are also sent to mining establishments and salt-works and to gold-placers. Forced colonists are distributed, in accordance with the nature of their sentences and the directions of the *Prikáz o Sílnikh*, throughout the provinces and territories of Eastern Siberia, with the exception of the Amúr region. To the latter are sent only an insignificant number of forced colonists—mostly hard-labor convicts from the island of Saghalín, who finished their terms of penal servitude before the year 1880, when the sending of forced colonists from there to the mainland was stopped.

Notwithstanding the length of time that the deportation of criminals has been practised, the exile system and penal servitude in Eastern Siberia are in the most unsatisfactory state. In the chief administration there is not even a department for their superintendence and regulation, while the exile bureaus in the provinces are not organized in a manner commensurate with the importance of the work that they have to do, and are prejudicial rather than useful to the service. The *étapes*, forwarding prisons, and prisons of other kinds, with the most insignificant exceptions, are tumble-down buildings, in bad sanitary condition, cold in winter, saturated with miasm, and, to crown all, affording very little security against escapes. The prisons in Nízhni Údinsk, Chíta, Nérchinsk, Blagovéishchensk, and particularly Nikoláivsk, astound one by their bad condition. The reasons for this melancholy state of the prisons are many. In the first place, the prisons of the empire generally, with the exception of the principal ones recently erected, are not remarkable for their good qualities, and the Siberian prisons are bad particularly because they were built quickly, with insufficient means, and almost wholly without supervision, either administrative or technical, the latter especially on account of the lack of architects. The last reason is applicable even now to prisons in process of erection. The prison at Vérkhni Údinsk,

seems to me better to let it stand as I originally made it, than to improve the English style at the expense, possibly, of fidelity to the original. The report itself was rather careless and slipshod in construction, and all that I could do, in the brief time it was in my hands, was to reproduce it, with all its faults, in intelligible English. I cannot now refer to it nor remember its phraseology, and I therefore follow the copy in my note-book.

which, according to the estimates, is to cost more than 250,000 *rúbles*, has been built, and will presently be completed, under the supervision of an architect who does not live where the work is going on, and who pays to it only an occasional visit. A number of *étapes*, which are in process of erection simultaneously along a distance of more than five hundred *versts*, are under the superintendence of an architect who has a great quantity of other important work to look after. The results are perfectly intelligible. The contractors find no difficulty in departing from the plans, estimates, and conditions, and accountability for the work is merely formal and almost wholly fictitious. Apart from this lack of proper supervision, the amount of money appropriated for prison buildings is too small. *Étapes*, for example, are built of logs, without stone foundations, and, as a result, their long walls soon settle and become crooked, and the whole edifice assumes the appearance of a ruin, which is speedily made complete by inadequate care, climatic agencies, and injuries done to it by its temporary occupants, the exiles. It is absolutely necessary to increase the number of architects in the country, and to pay them more than the present rates of salary. The extra expense thus incurred will be productive, because it will result in the better construction of Government buildings, and thus in a very considerable saving in the future.

Prisoners are forwarded from place to place in Eastern Siberia "by *étape* process." Parties under the supervision of a "convoy command" march from *étape* to *étape*, and are whole months on the way, while hard-labor convicts, who must go to the head waters of the Amúr River, do not reach their destination in less than a year from the time when they enter Eastern Siberia. In the *étapes* the male prisoners and the families that voluntarily accompany them are kept, as far as possible, in separate *kámeras;* but they spend the greater part of the day together, and the scenes of debauchery to be witnessed here cannot possibly be described. All the shame and all the conscience that a criminal has left are here lost completely. Here go to ruin also the families of the criminals, irrespective of age or sex. In addition to debauchery, the prisoners are guilty of many other offenses and crimes, among which changing of names occupies an important place. A hard-labor convict, for example, changes names with a mere exile, and goes into simple banishment instead of penal servitude, while the one who takes his place knows that he can easily make his escape from penal servitude. The subsistence of the prisoners on the road is very expensive to the Government, and yet the exiles are very badly fed. Receiving food-money in the shape of cash in hand, they seldom get anything warm to eat, and feeding them from a common kettle is almost impracticable and is rarely attempted.

The exile system is almost completely unorganized. Although the laws have established innumerable rules for its regulation, such rules, for the most part, have been dead letters since the very day of their promulga-

tion on account of their impracticability and of the absence of proper supervision. Forced colonization consists of the distribution and enrolment of the criminal colonists in the *vólosts* [cantons or districts of a province]. Upon reaching the places of their enrolment, after so long a period of imprisonment, they receive full freedom, and must look out for their own maintenance. Only the least spoiled part of them, and those accustomed to work, establish themselves in the places to which they are assigned, or seek employment in the gold-placers. The rest abandon their places of enrolment and wander about the country, giving themselves up to laziness, and imposing themselves as a heavy burden upon the local population, at whose expense they are fed. The influence of these exiles upon the people of the country is very pernicious, since they carry into the villages and towns the seeds of depravity. As the Siberian population grows more and more prosperous, it manifestly feels, more and more, the heavy burden of these criminal colonists, and submits to their presence only as to an evil that is inevitable, protesting loudly, however, in the mean time, against such an order of things.

Penal servitude exists on the mainland and on the island of Saghalín, but there are no special convict prisons for the confinement of convicts during the time that they are not at work. Hard labor itself is not definitely regulated, and convicts either work very little or are engaged in labor which, although hard, is not of such a nature as to render practicable the regular and constant supervision of the laborers. Such labor, for example, includes the erection of buildings of various kinds, the construction of roads, the working of gold-placers, the making of salt, and the mining of coal. All of this work is done outside the prisons. *Kátorga* [penal servitude] on the mainland is centered, for the most part, in the Karáa gold-placers, where last year [1881], in five prisons, there were 2939 men and 151 women. The convicts, as a whole, are divided into two classes—namely, those "on trial" and those "reforming." The "on trial" class includes all new-comers, who are kept in prison for certain fixed periods proportionate to the severity of their sentences. At the expiration of their prison terms, if their behavior has been such as to meet with approval, they are transferred to the "reforming" class, and have a right to live outside the prison walls. They generally occupy small houses built by themselves in the vicinity of the prisons. The place of penal servitude thus consists of a mass of Government prison-buildings surrounded by a greater or less number of houses belonging to private individuals or to convicts of the "reforming" class. It will be manifest that this renders the work of supervision extremely difficult, and hence the number of escapes from Karáa is very large. In 1881 there escaped 272 persons, or more than 9 per cent. of the whole number of convicts. The work in the Karáa gold-placers is not hard, and the convicts [who work side by side with free laborers] are well fed. In the Alexandrófski prison [near Irkútsk] all

the work is domestic, and penal servitude consists merely of imprisonment with light labor. Still less hard is the work of convicts leased to the owners of private gold-placers and salt-works. Their situation differs little from that of free laborers. Among the convicts, however, are not a few feeble or decrepit persons, who are unfit for work and who are depressed by sickness. Their condition is burdensome in the extreme, and for most of them I can see only one end — the grave. The prison hospitals and asylums are in a lamentable condition. It is greatly to be regretted that there are many children in penal servitude — children who have come from places of exile or who have been born in Siberia. At Karà there is little supervision over them, and little probability, on account of the lack of funds, that the children's asylum, which has been authorized, will soon become a reality.

Unorganized and unregulated penal servitude of this sort fills all the surrounding country with *brodyágs* [runaway convicts], and overcrowds all the Siberian prisons. Even at the mines there are great numbers of recidivists, formerly convicts, who have escaped and been recaptured. The impossibility of establishing the identity of persons arrested without passports often results in the condemnation of a captured *brodyág* to four years of penal servitude,[1] when, before his escape, he had belonged to a class condemned to ten or more years of penal servitude. Escape, therefore, besides giving him temporary freedom, lessens considerably his punishment, even after recapture and a new trial. When a convict finishes his term of penal servitude he goes into forced colonization in the same way that a forced colonist does if banished directly from one of the interior provinces. The Karà gold-placers are situated on the bank of the river Shílka, and steamers from the lower Amúr come directly to the Karà landing. There was a project to bring convicts to Karà around the world and up the Amúr; but, although it was considered and found feasible, it has never been carried into effect for the reason that the volunteer fleet is not able to provide the necessary transportation.

Penal servitude on the island of Saghalín is organized in the same way as at Karà, but the work at the former place is much harder, and the place itself is wilder and more solitary. This, with the prospect of remaining on a distant island as a settler after the completion of a term of hard labor, makes the lot of a Saghalín convict a very hard one, and one that corresponds much more nearly with the punishment which the law has in view.[2] It should be remembered, however, that the transportation of convicts to Saghalín by sea is very convenient, and is much easier for the convict himself than the agonizing journey across the

[1] This is the penalty for being found at large in Eastern Siberia without a passport, and refusing to disclose one's name and previous place of residence.

[2] The number of convicts on the island of Saghalín is 3000. [The number on the 1st of January, 1889, was 5530. Author's note.]

whole of Siberia to Karâ. In this respect the Saghalín convicts have an advantage over the convicts who work on the mainland. The experiment tried during the last few years of keeping convicts on Saghalín has shown the perfect practicability of making that island a place for the organization of penal servitude, and insuring the future of colonization by means of agriculture and the development of the natural resources of the country. In order, however, that this may be duly accomplished, it is necessary to organize a permanent administration for the island, and with this work the chief prison administration is now occupied.

The greatest advantage of the organization of penal servitude on the island of Saghalín lies in the fact that the convicts, and afterward the forced colonists, are there isolated from the free population, and can establish themselves without interfering with innocent people, as they would on the mainland.

As conclusions from all that has been said above with regard to penal servitude, the exile system, and prisons, it appears:

1. That penal servitude and the exile system in Eastern Siberia are wholly unorganized, and that their organization will necessitate a great financial expenditure.

2. That the forwarding of exiles by *étape* is expensive, is accompanied with great suffering for the exiles, and is a heavy burden to the local population along the route over which the exile parties pass.

3. That the exile element is very injurious to the people of Siberia, is burdensome to it, costs it dear, and is a source of moral corruption.

4. That the prisons and *étapes* demand, and, on account of local conditions [such as climatic agencies, the difficulty of maintaining a watch over the buildings, and the injuries done to them by passing prisoners] will always demand, very considerable annual expenditures; and, independent of the latter, that it will become necessary in the near future to spend an enormous sum of money in renewing these buildings.

5. That the concentration and organization of penal servitude on the island of Saghalín are perfectly practicable.

Imperial interests require that the most serious attention be given at once to this subject. The advantages offered by the island of Saghalín should be utilized as a means of freeing Siberia from the convict element, and this should be done without grudging the money that may be necessary for its accomplishment. The results to the Empire will be enormous, morally in raising the spirit of the Siberian people, and economically in the development of the resources of the island of Saghalín. The transportation of all convicts to this island, and the equipment of them with the necessary means of maintaining and subsisting themselves, will establish our maritime relations with the far East, and this is extremely important for the development of the Amúr region.

Having witnessed on the ground all the miseries brought upon Eastern Siberia by penal servitude and forced colonization, I regard it as my sacred duty to bear witness before your Imperial Majesty that every measure looking to the localization of penal servitude and the limitation of exile will be, for the people of Eastern Siberia, the greatest possible of boons. The adoption of such measures is necessary in order to regulate this exile system, which is an ulcer upon the Empire, and which swallows up an immense quantity of money to no purpose. I have not concealed from the Minister of the Interior the present unsatisfactory state of the exile system, penal servitude, and prisons in the country intrusted to my care. The chief prison administration comes to my assistance as far as possible, but its means are limited and if serious measures are not taken we shall be confronted by very great difficulties, of which it seems to me my duty to give notice in time.

In concluding this part of my report, I must offer, for the most gracious consideration of your Imperial Majesty, a few words concerning the State [political] criminals now living in Eastern Siberia. On the 1st of January, 1882, they numbered in all 430 persons, as follows:

a. Sent to Siberia by decree of a court and now	
1. In penal servitude	123
2. In forced colonization	49
3. In assigned residences [*na zhityó*]	41
b. Sent to Siberia by administrative process and now	
1. In assigned residences [*na zhítelstvo*]	217
Total	430

All of the state criminals belonging to the penal-servitude class are held at the Karâ gold-mines, under guard of a foot-company of the Trans-Baikâl Cossacks consisting of two hundred men. The sending of these criminals to work with the common convicts in the gold-placers is impossible. To employ them in such work in isolation from the others is very difficult, on account of the lack of suitable working-places, their unfitness for hard physical labor, and the want of an adequate convoy. If to these considerations be added the fact that unproductive hard labor, such as that employed in other countries merely to subject the prisoner to severe physical exertion, is not practised with us, it will become apparent that we have no hard labor for this class of criminals to perform, and the local authorities, who are in charge of them, and who are held to strict accountability for escapes, are compelled, by force of circumstances, to limit themselves to keeping such state criminals in prison under strict guard, employing them, occasionally, in work within the prison court, or not far from it. Such labor has not the character of penal servitude, but may rather be regarded as hygienic. Immunity from hard labor, however, does not render the lot of state criminals an

easy one. On the contrary, complete isolation and constant confinement to their own limited circle make their life unbearable. From the observation of a person who has close relations with them, it appears that they are divided into parties hostile to one another, and merely make a show to the prison overseers of living together in peace and harmony. Such a situation has an injurious influence upon the weaker characters. There have been a number of suicides among them, and within a few days one of them, Pózen, has gone insane. A number of others are in a mental condition very near to insanity. In accordance with an understanding that I have with the Ministry of the Interior, all sufferers from mental disorder will be removed, if possible, to hired quarters in the town of Chíta, since there are in Siberia no regular asylums for the insane, and all the existing institutions of that kind in European Russia are full.

The other state criminals, who are living in forced colonization or in assigned residences under police surveillance, are distributed in small groups among towns and villages situated [as far as possible] away from the principal roads, so that escape from them may be more difficult. Most of these exiles have no adequate means of their own to live on, and the distribution of them in thinly settled districts renders the finding of work almost impossible, even for those of them who know some trade and would be willing to work. As a result of this it becomes necessary for the Government to assume the expense of their subsistence by giving to every one of them an allowance of from six to twenty *rúbles* a month, according to local conditions. Exceptions to this are very rare.

The surveillance of state criminals is very unsatisfactory, and it is a question whether the principal safeguard against their escape is not the deportation of them to remote and desolate places, which, of themselves, render escape a thing not to be thought of. Police supervision, which is not attended with satisfactory results even in the provinces of European Russia, amounts, in Siberia, to little or nothing, because there are districts here where a single *isprávnik* and his assistant have to look after a territory comprising several thousand square *versts*. The surveillance of the village authorities is only nominal. The offenses committed by the state criminals exiled to Siberia, and their accomplices, characterize sufficiently their personality and their aspirations. It is doubtful whether imprisonment and exile have brought any of them to their senses. It is more than probable that they have become still more hardened and obdurate. Exiled as adherents of the party of anarchy, they do not conceal their convictions in the places to which they have been banished, but give open expression to their false judgments. It must be said, frankly, that the Government itself, by means of exile and at its own expense, spreads anarchistic ideas in places where, as in Eastern Siberia, nothing of the kind has ever before been known or heard of. Some of the young people in Siberia have already been led astray, and it is impossible not to feel

serious anxiety with regard to the further extension of the disturbance. If imperial considerations render it impossible to put a stop to the banishment of this class of offenders, they should be isolated, so far as possible, even in Siberia, from the local population. This subject is now occupying the attention of the Minister of the Interior, and I am taking part in his deliberations. The conditions of the question are so complicated that it is difficult to settle upon anything, and thus far nothing has been decided upon. The concentration of such persons in one place, or the segregation of them in groups of considerable size in several places, would obviate the necessity of scattering them over the whole country, and would facilitate surveillance; but, on the other hand, it is doubtful whether, on account of the smallness of Siberian towns, it would not necessitate the finding of quarters for them and the subjection of them to discipline in their social life; and this would not be far removed from the prison confinement to which they might be subjected without sending them to Siberia. In any case, it is extremely necessary that they should be kept under more vigilant surveillance, otherwise escapes, which now occur rarely, may assume more extensive proportions, and every such criminal who escapes from Siberia becomes extraordinarily harmful and dangerous. The serious importance of escapes should receive the more attention for the reason that among the exiles banished to Siberia and living there in comparative freedom are not a few extremely harmful persons — persons much more dangerous than those sent into penal servitude. To the best of my information there exists among these exiles a rule to assist in the escape of the more self-reliant and resolute characters, and the latter, in return, promise to sacrifice themselves for the attainment of the ends designated by their leaders. Recognition of the importance of preventing the escape of such criminal evil-doers, and the almost complete impossibility of so doing render my position, and that of the administration dependent upon me, a very hard one. We are overburdened by the weight of the responsibility that rests upon us, and the threatening possibility of the escape of this or that exile keeps us in constant fear of incurring your Imperial Majesty's displeasure. It is my plain duty to report to your Majesty that the administrative authorities of Eastern Siberia are honorably fulfilling their obligations in this particular, and I hope that they will not give occasion for any complaints. There have been only three escapes from regularly organized prisons, and, in connection with them, it must be remembered that state criminals, who are experienced in plots, bold in their plans and resolute in carrying them into execution, have, as their adversaries, imperfectly educated prison wardens, and subordinate officials who stand on a still lower plane of intellectual development. The escape of Maláfski and Ivánof from the Krasnoyársk prison seems to indicate a relaxation of discipline in that place of confinement. I have sent one of my officers, Major Kalageórgi,

to make an investigation of all the circumstances connected with it, and with the prison management; but I have not yet received his report. So far as the people of Siberia are concerned, they do not sympathize with state criminals, and after the melancholy occurrence of the 1st of March, 1881,[1] several Siberian towns asked that such criminals might be removed from within their limits. Their requests, however, could not be granted, because the concentration of state criminals in towns places them, at least, under some real surveillance from the local police. . . .

In this communication with regard to the state of the administration in Eastern Siberia, I have sketched, in general outline, the condition of the various branches of the Government. The truthfulness and frankness which have guided me in the preparation of this humble report to your Imperial Majesty have compelled me to paint an ugly picture.[2] Eastern Siberia is a country not only far removed by nature, but neglected in all branches of imperial government. No matter where you look you see imperfections, faults, and often abuses. For too long a time nothing has been done for Siberia, and now the results are to be seen in the extremely melancholy condition of its administration.

Your Imperial Majesty! Siberia is truly a beautiful country. Its people are gifted with high intellectual capacity, and are honest, industrious, and energetic. Both the country and its inhabitants deserve the most gracious consideration. I regard it as my first duty to intercede with your Majesty in behalf of this country and its necessities, and I do so, boldly, in this humble report, confidently hoping that the attitude which I have taken with regard to the interests of the country committed to my care will not be attributed to me as a fault. It is my sincere conviction that now, at the beginning of the fourth century of the vital union of Siberia with Russia, it is time for the Government to give that country particular attention, and extricate it from the position into which it has been put by its remoteness from the center of the Empire, by its designation as a place of exile and penal servitude, and by the long-continued failure to satisfy its needs and demands. All the reforms that are necessary for Siberia are bound up with the question of financial means. If the money be given, it will be possible to begin a whole series of reforms; and the officers to carry them into execution may be found if their services in this remote country can be properly compensated. But the mere assignment of the means is not enough. The money must be properly used, strict order must be maintained, and the necessary measures progressively adopted.

At the present time, when every requisition of the local authorities is satisfied by this or the other department, it often happens that the least

[1] The assassination of Alexander II. [Author's note.]

[2] On the margin of the original report, opposite this sentence, stands in the Tsar's handwriting the word "Yes!"

important requests are granted, while the most important are postponed. This is comprehensible. Every department supports that in which it is interested, and so it often happens that the resources of the imperial treasury are spent for things that are not the most important and vital. In order to avoid this, it should be decided how large a sum of money can be set apart annually for the needs of Siberia. Then the governor-general should be authorized to make suggestions with regard to reforms in accordance with local conditions and circumstances. Knowing what sum he will be allowed, he can make his representations correspond with it. I should fix this sum at first at 100,000 *rúbles* per annum. With such an amount it would be possible, the third or fourth year, to begin prison buildings of considerable importance. . . . With the adoption of such measures the local governor-general would be able to act energetically for the welfare of the country committed to his care.

If it please your Imperial Majesty to approve my suggestions, and if the annual sum that I have recommended for reforms in Eastern Siberia be granted, this remote country will be enabled to develop its economic resources and begin a new life.[1]

There has been some discussion in the newspapers of the question whether the Tsar is aware of the condition of the Siberian prisons and of the sufferings of the Siberian exiles. In the light of the above report the question must be answered unhesitatingly in the affirmative.

[1] Opposite this sentence, on the margin of the original report, stand, in the Tsar's handwriting, the words "I should greatly like to do this, and it seems to me indispensable." Upon the report, as a whole, the Tsar made the following indorsement: "I have read this with great interest, and I am more than troubled by this melancholy but just description of the Government's forgetfulness of a country so rich and so necessary to Russia. It is inexcusable, and even criminal, to allow such a state of affairs in Siberia to continue." Upon the part of the report relating to prisons and the exile system the Tsar has indorsed the words, "Grústnaya no ne nóvaya kartína" [A melancholy but not a new picture].

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